Tafsir Ibn Kathir

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لاَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah

Al-Mu'minun

Revealed in Makkah

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَـنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

23:1 Successful indeed are the believers.

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِى صَلَاتِهِمْ خَـشِعُونَ

23:2 Those who with their Salah are Khashi`un.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُّعْرِضُونَ

23:3 And those who turn away from Al-Laghw.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَـوةِ فَـعِلُونَ

23:4 And those who pay the Zakah.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَـفِظُونَ

23:5 And those who guard their private parts.

إِلاَّ عَلَى أَزْوَجِهِمْ أوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَـنُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ

23:6 Except from their wives or their right hand possessions, for then, they are free from blame.

فَمَنِ ابْتَغَى وَرَآءَ ذلِكَ فَأُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ

23:7 But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لاًّمَـنَـتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَعُونَ

23:8 Those who are faithfully true to their Amanat and to their covenants are Ra`un.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَوَتِهِمْ يُحَـفِظُونَ

23:9 And those who strictly guard their Salawat.

أُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْورِثُونَ

23:10 These are indeed the heirs.

الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَـلِدُونَ

23:11 Who shall inherit Firdaws. They shall dwell therein forever.

The Success is for the believers whose qualities are described here

Allah says:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ (١)

Successful indeed are the believers,

means, they have attained victory and are blessed, for they have succeeded. These are the believers who have the following characteristics:

الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ (٢)

Those who with their **Salah** are **Khashi`un**.

Ali bin Abi Talhah reported that Ibn Abbas said:

"(**خَاشِعُونَ** **Khashi`un**) means those with fear and with tranquility.''

This was also narrated from Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Qatadah and Az-Zuhri.

It was reported from Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, that;

Khushu`** means the **Khushu` of the heart.

This was also the view of Ibrahim An-Nakha`i.

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said,

"Their **Khushu`** was in their hearts.''

So they lowered their gaze and were humble towards others.

Khushu` in prayer is only attained by the one who has emptied his heart totally, who does not pay attention to anything else besides it, and who prefers it above all else. At that point it becomes a delight and a joy for eyes, as in the **Hadith** recorded by Imam Ahmad and An-Nasa'i from Anas, who said that the Messenger of Allah said:

حُبِّبَ إِلَيَّ الطِّيبُ وَالنِّسَاءُ، وَجُعِلَتْ قُرَّةُ عَيْنِي فِي الصَّلَاةِ

Fragrance and women have been made dear to me, and **Salah** was made the joy of my eye.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ (٣)

And those who turn away from **Al-Laghw**.

refers to falsehood, which includes **Shirk** and sin, and any words or deeds that are of no benefit.

As Allah says:

وَإِذَا مَرُّواْ بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّواْ كِراماً

And if they pass by **Al-Laghw**, they pass by it with dignity. (25:72)

Qatadah said:

"By Allah, there came to them from Allah that which kept them away from that (evil).''

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ (٤)

And those who pay the **Zakah**.

Most commentators say that the meaning here is the **Zakah** that is paid on wealth, even though this **Ayah** was revealed in Makkah, and **Zakah** was ordained in Al-Madinah in the year 2 H.

The apparent meaning is that the **Zakah** that was instituted in Al-Madinah is the one based upon the **Nusub** and the specific amounts, apart from which it seems that the basic principle of **Zakah** was enjoined in Makkah. As Allah says in Surah **Al-An`am**, which was also revealed in Makkah:

وَءَاتُواْ حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ

but pay the due thereof on the day of their harvest, (6:141)

It could be that what is meant here by **Zakah** is purification of the soul from **Shirk** and filth, as in the **Ayah**:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّـهَا

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّـهَا

Indeed he succeeds who purifies himself (**Zakkaha**). And indeed he fails who corrupts himself. (91:9-10)

It could be that both meanings are intended, purification of the soul and of one's wealth, because that is part of the purification of the soul, and the true believer is one who pays attention to both matters.

And Allah knows best.

And Allah says;

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِفُرُوجِهِمْ حَافِظُونَ (٥)

إِلَّا عَلَى أَزْوَاجِهِمْ أوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ (٦)

فَمَنِ ابْتَغَى وَرَاء ذَلِكَ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ (٧)

And those who guard their private parts. Except from their wives and their right hand possessions, for then, they are free from blame. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors.

means, those who protect their private parts from unlawful actions and do not do that which Allah has forbidden; fornication and homosexuality, and do not approach anyone except the wives whom Allah has made permissible for them or their right hand possessions from the captives. One who seeks what Allah has made permissible for him is not to be blamed and there is no sin on him.

Allah says:

... فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ مَلُومِينَ

فَمَنِ ابْتَغَى وَرَاء ذَلِكَ ...

they are free from blame. But whoever seeks beyond that, meaning, other than a wife or slave girl,

... فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ

then those are the transgressors.

meaning, aggressors.

Allah says:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ (٨)

Those who are faithfully true to their **Amanat** and to their covenants,

When they are entrusted with something, they do not betray that trust, but they fulfill it, and when they make a promise or make a pledge, they are true to their word.

This is not like the hypocrites about whom the Messenger of Allah said:

آيَةُ الْمُنَافِقِ ثَلَاثٌ:

- إِذَا حَدَّثَ كَذَبَ،
- وَإِذَا وَعَدَ أَخْلَفَ،
- وَإِذَا اؤْتُمِنَ خَانَ

The signs of the hypocrite are three:

- when he speaks he lies,
- when he makes a promise he breaks it, and
- when he is entrusted with something he betrays that trust.

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ (٩)

And those who strictly guard their **Salawat**.

means, they persistently offer their prayers at their appointed times,

Ibn Mas`ud said:

"I asked the Messenger of Allah, `O Messenger of Allah, which deed is most beloved to Allah!'

He said,

الصَّلَاةُ عَلَى وَقْتِهَا

Prayer at the appointed time.

I said, `Then what!'

He said,

بِرُّ الْوَالِدَيْن

Kindness to one's parents.

I said, `Then what!'

He said,

الْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ الله

Jihad in the way of Allah.

It was recorded in the Two **Sahihs**.

Qatadah said:

"At the fixed times, with the proper bowing and prostration.''

Allah begins and ends this list of praiseworthy qualities with **Salah**, which is indicative of its virtue, as the Prophet said:

اسْتَقِيمُوا ولَنْ تُحْصُوا، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ خَيْرَ أَعْمَالِكُمُ الصَّلَاةُ، ولَا يُحَافِظُ علَى الْوُضُوءِ إِلَّا مُؤْمِن

Adhere to righteousness, you will never be able encompass it all. Know that the best of your deeds is **Salah**. None will preserve his **Wuddu'** except the believer.

Having described them with these praiseworthy characteristics and righteous deeds, Allah then says:

أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ (١٠)

الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ (١١)

These are indeed the heirs. Who shall inherit **Firdaws**. They shall dwell therein forever.

It was recorded in the Two **Sahihs** that the Messenger of Allah said:

إِذَا سَأَلْتُمُ اللهَ الْجَنَّةَ فَاسْأَلُوهُ الفِرْدَوْسَ، فَإِنَّهُ أَعْلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَأَوْسَطُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَمِنْهُ تَفَجَّرُ أَنْهَارُ الْجَنَّةِ، وَفَوْقَهُ عَرْشُ الرَّحْمن

If you ask Allah for Paradise, then ask him for **Al-Firdaws**, for it is the highest part of Paradise, in the middle of Paradise, and from it spring the rivers of Paradise, and above it is the (Mighty) Throne of the Most Merciful.

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abu Hurayrah said,

"The Messenger of Allah said:

مَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا وَلَهُ مَنْزِلَانِ: مَنْزِلٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَنْزِلٌ فِي النَّارِ، فَإِنْ مَاتَ فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ وَرِثَ أَهْلُ الْجَنَّةِ مَنْزِلَهُ، فَذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُ:

أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ

There is not one among you who does not have two homes, a home in Paradise and a home in Hell. If he dies and enters Hell, the people of Paradise will inherit his home, and this is what Allah said:

أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ (These are indeed the heirs).

Ibn Jurayj narrated from Layth from Mujahid: أُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ (These are indeed the heirs),

"The believers will inherit the homes of the disbelievers because they were created to worship Allah Alone with no partner or associate. So when these believers did what was enjoined on them of worship, and the disbelievers neglected to do that which they were commanded to do and for which they had been created, the believers gained the share that they would have been given if they had obeyed their Lord. Indeed, they will be given more than that as well.''

This is what was reported in **Sahih** Muslim from Abu Burdah, from his father, from the Prophet who said:

يَجِيءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ نَاسٌ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ بِذُنُوبٍ أَمْثَالِ الْجِبَالِ، فَيَغْفِرُهَا اللهُ لَهُمْ وَيَضَعُهَا عَلَى الْيَهُودِ وَالنَّصَارَى

Some of the Muslims will come on the Day of Resurrection with sins like mountains, but Allah will forgive them and put (their burden of sin) on the Jews and Christians.

According to another version: the Messenger of Allah said:

إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ دَفَعَ اللهُ لِكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ يَهُودِيًّا أَوْ نَصْرَانِيًّا، فَيُقَالُ:

هَذَا فِكَاكُكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

When the Day of Resurrection comes, Allah will appoint for every Muslim a Jew or Christian, and it will be said,

"This is your ransom from the Fire.''

Umar bin Abd Al-Aziz asked Abu Burdah to swear by Allah besides Whom there is no other God, three times, that his father told him that from the Prophet, and he swore that oath. I say: this **Ayah** is like Allah's saying:

تِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِى نُورِثُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا مَن كَانَ تَقِيّاً

Such is the Paradise which We shall give as an inheritance to those of Our servants who have had **Taqwa**. (19:63)

وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِى أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

This is the Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of your deeds which you used to do. (43:72)

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الإِنْسَـنَ مِن سُلَـلَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ

23:12 And indeed We created man out of an extract of Tin.

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَـهُ نُطْفَةً فِى قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ

23:13 Thereafter We made him a Nutfah in a safe lodging.

ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَـماً فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَـمَ لَحْماً ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَـهُ خَلْقاً ءَاخَرَ

23:14 Then We made the Nutfah into a clot, then We made the clot into a little lump of flesh, then We made out of that little lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We brought it forth as another creation.

فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَـلِقِينَ

So Blessed is Allah, the Best of creators.

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ

23:15 After that, surely you will die.

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَـمَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ

23:16 Then (again), surely you will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection.

The Sign of Allah in the progressive creation of Man from Clay then from Nutfah and thereafter

Allah tells:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ مِن سُلَالَةٍ مِّن طِينٍ (١٢)

And indeed We created man out of an extract of **Tin**.

Allah tells us how He initially created man from an extract of **Tin**. This was Adam, peace be upon him, whom Allah created from sounding clay of altered black smooth mud.

Ibn Jarir said,

"Adam was called **Tin** because he was created from it.''

Qatadah said,

"Adam was created from **Tin**.''

This is the more apparent meaning and is closer to the context, for Adam, upon him be peace, was created from a sticky **Tin**, which is a sounding clay of altered black smooth mud, and that is created from dust, as Allah says:

وَمِنْ ءَايَـتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَكُمْ مِّن تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ إِذَآ أَنتُمْ بَشَرٌ تَنتَشِرُونَ

And among His signs is this that He created you (Adam) from dust, and then -- behold you are human beings scattered! (30:20)

Imam Ahmad recorded from Abu Musa that the Prophet said:

إِنَّ اللهَ خَلَقَ آدَمَ مِنْ قَبْضَةٍ قَبَضَهَا مِنْ جَمِيعِ الْأَرْضِ، فَجَاءَ بَنُو آدَمَ عَلَى قَدْرِ الْأَرْضِ، جَاءَ مِنْهُمُ الْأَحْمَرُ وَالْأَبْيَضُ وَالْأَسْوَدُ وَبَيْنَ ذلِكَ، وَالْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَبَيْنَ ذلِك

Allah created Adam from a handful which He picked up from throughout the earth, so the sons of Adam came forth accordingly, red and white and black and in between, evil and good and in between.

Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi recorded something similar.

At-Tirmidhi said, "It is **Sahih Hasan**.''

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً ...

Thereafter We made him a **Nutfah**.

Here the pronoun refers back to humankind, as in another **Ayah**:

الَّذِى أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ خَلَقَهُ وَبَدَأَ خَلْقَ الإِنْسَـنِ مِن طِينٍ

ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُ مِن سُلاَلَةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍ مَّهِينٍ

and He began the creation of man from clay. Then He made his offspring from semen of despised water. (32:7-8)

meaning, weak, as He says:

أَلَمْ نَخْلُقكُّم مِّن مَّآءٍ مَّهِينٍ

فَجَعَلْنَـهُ فِى قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ

Did We not create you from a despised water, Then We placed it in a place of safety. (77:20-21)

meaning the womb, which is prepared and readily equipped for that,

... فِي قَرَارٍ مَّكِينٍ (١٣)

... in a safe lodging.

إِلَى قَدَرٍ مَّعْلُومٍ

فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَـدِرُونَ

For a known period. So We did measure; and We are the Best to measure. (77:22-23)

meaning, for a known period of time, until it is established and moves from one stage to the next.

Allah says here,

ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً ...

Then We made the **Nutfah** into a clot,

meaning, `then We made the **Nutfah**, which is the water gushing forth that comes from the loins of man, i.e., his back, and the ribs of woman, i.e., the bones of her chest, between the clavicle and the breast. Then it becomes a red clot, like an elongated clot.'

Ikrimah said, "This is blood.''

... فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً ...

then We made the clot into a little lump of flesh,

which is like a piece of flesh with no shape or features.

... فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا ...

then We made out of that little lump of flesh bones,

meaning, `We gave it shape, with a head, two arms and two legs, with its bones, nerves and veins.'

... فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ...

then We clothed the bones with flesh,

meaning, `We gave it something to cover it and strengthen it.'

... ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ...

and then We brought it forth as another creation.

means, `then We breathed the soul into it, and it moved and became a new creature, one that could hear, see, understand and move.

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ (and then We brought it forth as another creation).

Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn Abbas said,

"We change it from one stage to another until it emerges as an infant, then it grows up through

the stages of being a child, adolescent, youth, mature man, old man and senile man.''

Imam Ahmad recorded in his **Musnad** that Abdullah -- Ibn Mas`ud -- said,

"The Messenger of Allah, the Truthful One, told us:

إِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ لَيُجْمَعُ خَلْقُهُ فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ يَوْمًا نُطْفَةً، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ عَلَقَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يَكُونُ مُضْغَةً مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ يُرْسَلُ إِلَيْهِ الْمَلَكُ فَيَنْفُخُ فِيهِ الرُّوحَ وَيُؤْمَرُ بِأَرْبَعِ كَلِمَاتٍ: رِزْقِهِ، وَأَجَلِهِ، وَعَمَلِهِ، وَهَلْ هُوَ شَقِيٌّ أَوْ سَعِيدٌ، فَوَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ إِنَّ أَحَدَكُمْ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ حَتَّى مَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهَا إِلَّا ذِرَاعٌ، فَيَسْبِقُ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ فَيُخْتَمُ لَهُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَيَدْخُلُهَا، وَإِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ حَتَّى مَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهَا إِلَّا ذِرَاعٌ، فَيَسْبِقُ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ فَيُخْتَمُ لَهُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ فَيَدْخُلُهَا

The creation of anyone of you is gathered for forty days in his mother's stomach as a **Nutfah**, then he becomes a clot for a similar period of time, then he becomes a little lump of flesh for a similar length of time.

Then the angel is sent to him and he breathes the soul into it, and four things are decreed:

- his provision,
- his life-span,
- his deeds, and
- whether he will be wretched or blessed.

By the One besides Whom there is no other god, one of you may do the deeds of the people of Paradise until there is no more than a forearm's length between him and it, then the decree will overtake him and he will do the deeds of the people of Hell and thus enter Hell.

And a man may do the deeds of the people of Hell until there is no more than a forearm's length between him and it, then the decree will overtake

him and he will do finally the deeds of the people of Paradise and thus enter Paradise.

This was recorded by Al-Bukhari and Muslim.

... فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ (١٤)

So Blessed is Allah, the Best of creators.

means, when Allah mentions His ability and subtlety in creating this **Nutfah** and taking it from stage to stage until it takes the shape of a perfectly formed human being, He says, **فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ** (So Blessed is Allah, the Best of creators).

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ لَمَيِّتُونَ (١٥)

After that, surely you will die.

means, after first being created from nothing, you will eventually die.

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تُبْعَثُونَ (١٦)

Then (again), surely you will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection.

means, you will be created anew.

ثُمَّ اللَّهُ يُنشِىءُ النَّشْأَةَ الاٌّخِرَةَ

and then Allah will bring forth the creation of the Hereafter. (29:20),

means, the Day of Return, when the souls will be restored to their bodies and all of creation will be brought to account. Everyone will be rewarded or punished according to his deeds -- if they are good then he will be rewarded, and if they are bad then he will be punished.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَآئِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَـفِلِينَ

23:17 And indeed We have created above you seven Tara'iq, and We are never unaware of the creation.

His Sign in the creation of the Heavens

Allah says here,

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَائِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَافِلِينَ (١٧)

And indeed We have created above you seven **Tara'iq**, and We are never unaware of the creation.

After mentioning the creation of man, Allah then mentions the creation of the seven heavens.

Allah often mentions the creation of the heavens and earth alongside the creation of man, as He says elsewhere:

لَخَلْقُ السَّمَـوَتِ وَالاٌّرْضِ أَكْـبَرُ مِنْ خَلْقِ النَّاسِ

The creation of the heavens and the earth is indeed greater than the creation of mankind. (40:57)

A similar **Ayah** appears at the beginning of Surah **As-Sajdah**, which the Messenger of Allah used to recite on Friday mornings. At the beginning it mentions the creation of the heavens and earth, then it says how man was created from semen from clay, and it also discusses the resurrection and rewards and punishments, and other matters.

سَبْعَ طَرَائِقَ (seven **Tara'iq)**.

Mujahid said,

"This means the seven heavens.''

This is like the **Ayat**:

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَـوَتُ السَّبْعُ وَالاٌّرْضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّ

The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him. (17:44)

أَلَمْ تَرَوْاْ كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَـوَتٍ طِبَاقاً

See you not how Allah has created the seven heavens one above another! (71:15)

اللَّهُ الَّذِى خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَـوَتٍ وَمِنَ الاٌّرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الاٌّمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِّتَعْلَمُواْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عِلْمَا

It is Allah Who has created seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof. His command descends between them (heavens and earth), that you may know that Allah has power over all things, and that Allah surrounds all things in (His) knowledge. (65:12)

Similarly, Allah says here:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَائِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَافِلِينَ

And indeed We have created above you seven **Tara'iq**, and We are never unaware of the creation.

meaning, Allah knows what goes into the earth and what comes out of it, what comes down from heaven and what goes up into it. He is with you wherever you are, and Allah sees what you do. No heaven is hidden from Him by another and no earth is hidden from Him by another. There is no mountain but He knows its features, and no sea but He knows what is in its depths. He knows the numbers of what is in the mountains, the hills, the sands, the seas, the landscapes and the trees.

وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِن وَرَقَةٍ إِلاَّ يَعْلَمُهَا وَلاَ حَبَّةٍ فِى ظُلُمَـتِ الاٌّرْضِ وَلاَ رَطْبٍ وَلاَ يَابِسٍ إِلاَّ فِى كِتَـبٍ مُّبِينٍ

And not a leaf falls, but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record. (6:59)

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّاهُ فِى الاٌّرْضِ وَإِنَّا عَلَى ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لَقَـدِرُونَ

23:18 And We sent down from the sky water in measure, and We gave it lodging in the earth, and verily, We are able to take it away.

فَأَنشَأْنَا لَكُمْ بِهِ جَنَّـتٍ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَـبٍ لَّكُمْ فِيهَا فَوَكِهُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ

23:19 Then We brought forth for you therewith gardens of date palms and grapes, wherein is much fruit for you, and whereof you eat.

وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِن طُورِ سَيْنَآءَ تَنبُتُ بِالدُّهْنِ وَصِبْغٍ لِّلاٌّكِلِينَ

23:20 And a tree that springs forth from Tur Sinai, that grows oil, and relish for the eaters.

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِى الاٌّنْعَـمِ لَعِبْرَةً نُّسْقِيكُمْ مِّمَّا فِى بُطُونِهَا وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَـفِعُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ

23:21 And verily, in the cattle there is indeed a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies. And there are, in them, numerous benefits for you, and of them you eat.

وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى الْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ

23:22 And on them, and on ships you are carried.

Allah's Signs and Blessings in the Rain, Vegetation, Trees and Cattle

Allah mentions His innumerable blessings to His servants,

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاء مَاء بِقَدَرٍ ...

And We sent down from the sky water in measure,

> meaning, according to what is needed, not so much that it damages the lands and buildings, and not so little to be insufficient for crops and fruits, but whatever is needed for irrigation, drinking and other benefits. If there is a land that needs a lot of water for its irrigation but its fertile soil would be carried away if rain fell on it, then Allah sends water to it from another land, as in the case of Egypt, which is said to be a barren land. Allah sends the water of the Nile to it, which brings red soil from Ethiopia when it rains there. The water brings the red soil which is used to irrigate the land of Egypt, and whatever of it is deposited is used for agriculture, because the land of Egypt is infertile, and most of it is sand. Glory be to the Subtle One, the All-Knowing, the Most Merciful, the Forgiving.

... فَأَسْكَنَّاهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ ...

and We gave it lodging in the earth,

> means, `when the water comes down from the clouds, We cause it to settle in the earth, and We cause the earth to absorb it and the seeds etc. in the earth to be nourished by it.'

... وَإِنَّا عَلَى ذَهَابٍ بِهِ لَقَادِرُونَ (١٨)

and verily, We are able to take it away.

means,

- `if We wanted to cause it not to rain, We could do so;
- if We wanted to divert it towards the wilderness and wastelands, We could do so;

- if We wanted to make it salty so that you could not benefit from it for drinking or irrigation, We could do so;
- if We wanted to cause it not to be absorbed by the earth, but to remain on the surface, We could do so;
- if We wanted to make it go deep underground where you would not be able to reach it and you could not benefit from it, We could do so.'

But by His grace and mercy, He causes sweet, fresh water to fall on you from the clouds, then it settles in the earth and forms springs and rivers, and you use it to irrigate your crops and fruits, and you drink it and give it to your livestock and cattle, and you bathe and purify yourselves with it. To Him is due the praise and thanks.

فَأَنشَأْنَا لَكُم بِهِ جَنَّاتٍ مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ ...

Then We brought forth for you therewith gardens of date palms and grapes,

> means, `from that which We send down from the sky, We bring forth for you gardens and orchards which look beautiful.'

... مِّن نَّخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ ...

of date palms and grapes,

> These were the kinds of gardens that were known to the people of the Hijaz, but there is no difference between a thing and its counterpart. The people of each region have fruits which are the blessing of Allah given to them, and for which they cannot properly thank Allah enough.

... لَّكُمْ فِيهَا فَوَاكِهُ كَثِيرَةٌ ...

wherein is much fruit for you,

> means, of all fruits. As Allah says elsewhere:
>
> يُنبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالأَعْنَـبَ وَمِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَتِ

With it (the rain) He causes to grow for you the crops, the olives, the date palms, the grapes, and every kind of fruit. (16:11)

... وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ (١٩)

and whereof you eat.

This implies that you look at its beauty, wait for it to ripen, then eat from it.

وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِن طُورِ سَيْنَاء ...

And a tree that springs forth from **Tur** Sinai,

means the olive tree.

Tur means a mountain.

Some of the scholars said,

"It is called **Tur** if there are trees on it, and if it is bare it is called **Jabal**, not **Tur**."

And Allah knows best.

Mount Sinai is the same as **Tur Sinin**, and it is the mountain on which Allah spoke to Musa bin Imran, peace be upon him, and in the surrounding mountains there are olive trees.

... تَنبُتُ بِالدُّهْنِ ...

that grows oil,

Some scholars think it (linguistically) means that it brings forth oil.

Others say it (linguistically) means "comes forth with oil.''

Allah said,

... وَصِبْغٍ ...

and relish,

According to Qatadah,

"meaning a condiment."

... لِّلْآكِلِينَ (٢٠)

for the eaters.

means, it contains a beneficial oil and condiment.

Abd bin Humayd recorded in his **Musnad** and **Tafsir** from Umar that the Messenger of Allah said:

ائْتَدِمُوا بِالزَّيْتِ وَادَّهِنُوا بِهِ فَإِنَّهُ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَة

Eat (olive) oil as a condiment and apply it as oil, for it comes from a blessed tree.

It was recorded by At-Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah.

Allah's saying;

وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْأَنْعَامِ لَعِبْرَةً نُّسقِيكُم مِّمَّا فِي بُطُونِهَا وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ (٢١)

وَعَلَيْهَا وَعَلَى الْفُلْكِ تُحْمَلُونَ (٢٢)

And verily, in the cattle there is indeed a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies. And there are, in them, numerous benefits for you, and of them you eat. And on them and on ships you are carried,

Here Allah mentions the benefits He has given to His servants in cattle, for they drink their milk which comes out from between dung and blood, they eat their meat and clothe themselves with their wool and hair, they ride on their backs and carry heavy burdens on them to far away lands, as Allah says:

وَتَحْمِلُ أَثْقَالَكُمْ إِلَى بَلَدٍ لَّمْ تَكُونُواْ بَـلِغِيهِ إِلاَّ بِشِقِّ الأَنفُسِ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ لَرَؤُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

And they carry your loads to a land that you could not reach except with great trouble to yourselves. Truly, your Lord is full of kindness, Most Merciful. (16:7)

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْاْ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَا لَهُم مِمَّا عَمِلَتْ أَيْدِينَآ أَنْعـماً فَهُمْ لَهَا مَـلِكُونَ

وَذَلَّلْنَـهَا لَهُمْ فَمِنْهَا رَكُوبُهُمْ وَمِنْهَا يَأْكُلُونَ
وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مَنَـفِعُ وَمَشَـرِبُ أَفَلاَ يَشْكُرُونَ

Do they not see that We have created for them of what Our Hands have created, the cattle, so that they are their owners. And We have subdued them unto them so that some of them they have for riding and some they eat. And in them there are benefits for them, and drink. Will they not then be grateful! (36:71-73)

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحاً إِلَى قَوْمِهِ فَقَالَ يَقَوْمِ اعْبُدُواْ اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ إِلَـهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلاَ تَتَّقُونَ

23:23 And indeed We sent Nuh to his people, and he said: "O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other God but Him. Will you not then have Taqwa!''

فَقَالَ الْمَلَؤُا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ مِن قَوْمِهِ

23:24 But the chiefs of his people who disbelieved said:

مَا هَـذَا إِلاَّ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتَفَضَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَوْ شَآءَ اللَّهُ لأَنزَلَ مَلَـئِكَةً مَّا سَمِعْنَا بِهَـذَا فِى ءَابَآئِنَا الأَوَّلِينَ

"He is no more than a human being like you, he seeks to make himself superior to you. Had Allah willed, He surely could have sent down angels. Never did we hear such a thing among our fathers of old.''

إِنْ هُوَ إِلاَّ رَجُلٌ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ فَتَرَبَّصُواْ بِهِ حَتَّى حِينٍ

23:25 "He is only a man in whom is madness, so wait for him a while.''

The Story of Nuh, Peace be upon Him; and his people

Allah tells;

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَى قَوْمِهِ ...

And indeed We sent Nuh to his people,

Allah tells us about Nuh, peace be upon him, whom He sent him to his people to warn them of the severe punishment of Allah and His severe vengeance on those who associated partners with Him, defied His commands and disbelieved His Messengers:

... فَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (٢٣)

and he said: "O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other God but Him. Will you not then have **Taqwa**!'

> Meaning, "Do you not fear Allah when you associate others in worship with Him''

فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ ...

But the chiefs of his people who disbelieved said:

> The chiefs or leaders of his people said:

... مَا هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُرِيدُ أَن يَتَفَضَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ ...

He is no more than a human being like you, he seeks to make himself superior to you.

> meaning, `he is putting himself above you and trying to make himself great by claiming to be a Prophet, but he is a human being like you, so how can he receive revelation when you do not!'

... وَلَوْ شَاء اللَّهُ لَأَنزَلَ مَلَائِكَةً ....

Had Allah willed, He surely could have sent down angels.

> meaning, `if Allah had wanted to send a Prophet, He would have sent an angel from Him, not a human being.

.. مَّا سَمِعْنَا بِهَذَا فِي آبَائِنَا الْأَوَّلِينَ (٢٤)

Never did we hear such a thing among our fathers of old.''

> We have never heard of such a thing -- i.e., sending a man to our forefathers' -- their predecessors in times past.

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ ...

He is only a man in whom is madness,

> means, `he is crazy in his claim that Allah has sent him and chosen him from among you to receive revelation.'

... فَتَرَبَّصُوا بِهِ حَتَّى حِينٍ (٢٥)

so wait for him a while.

> means, `wait until he dies, put up with him until you are rid of him.'

قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ

23:26 He said: "O my Lord! Help me because they deny me.''

فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ أَنِ اصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا فَإِذَا جَاء أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ فَاسْلُكْ فِيهَا مِن كُلٍّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ إِلَّا مَن سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ مِنْهُمْ وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُم مُّغْرَقُونَ

23:27 So, We revealed to him: "Construct the ship under Our Eyes and under Our revelation. Then, when Our command comes, and (water) gushes forth from the oven, take on board of each kind two, and your family, except those thereof against whom the Word has already gone forth. And address Me not in favor of those who have done wrong. Verily, they are to be drowned.''

فَإِذَا اسْتَوَيْتَ أَنتَ وَمَن مَّعَكَ عَلَى الْفُلْكِ فَقُلِ

23:28 "And when you have embarked on the ship, you and whoever is with you, then say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَجَّانَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

`All the praise be to Allah, Who has saved us from the people who are wrongdoers.''

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَنزِلْنِي مُنزَلًا مُّبَارَكًا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنزِلِينَ

23:29 "And say: `My Lord! Cause me to land at a blessed landing place, for You are the Best of those who bring to land.'''

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ وَإِن كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ

23:30 Verily, in this, there are indeed Ayat, for sure We are ever putting (men) to the test.

Allah tells us that Nuh, peace be upon him, invoked his Lord to help him against his people,

Allah tells;

قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ (٢٦)

He (Nuh) said: "O my Lord! Help me because they deny me.''

as Allah mentions in another **Ayah**:

فَدَعَا رَبَّهُ أَنِّى مَغْلُوبٌ فَانتَصِرْ

Then he invoked his Lord (saying): "I have been overcome, so help (me)!'' (54:10)

Here he says: **رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ** (O my Lord! Help me because they deny me).

فَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ أَنِ اصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا فَإِذَا جَاء أَمْرُنَا وَفَارَ التَّنُّورُ فَاسْلُكْ فِيهَا مِن كُلٍّ زَوْجَيْنِ اثْنَيْنِ وَأَهْلَكَ...

So, We revealed to him: "Construct the ship under Our Eyes and under Our revelation. Then, when Our command comes, and (water) gushes forth from the oven, take on board of each kind two, and your family,

> At that point, Allah commanded him to build a boat and to make it strong and firm, and to carry therein of every kind two, i.e., a male and a female of every species of animals, plants and fruits etc. He was also to carry his family,

... إِلَّا مَن سَبَقَ عَلَيْهِ الْقَوْلُ مِنْهُمْ ...

except those thereof against whom the Word has already gone forth.

> meaning, those whom Allah had already decreed were to be destroyed. These were the members of his family who did not believe in him, such as his son and his wife.
>
> And Allah knows best.

... وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُم مُّغْرَقُونَ (٢٧)

And address Me not in favor of those who have done wrong. Verily, they are to be drowned.

> means, `when you witness the heavy rain falling, do not let yourself be overcome with compassion and pity for your people, or hope for more time for them so that they may believe, for I have decreed that they will be drowned and will die in their state of disbelief and wrongdoing.'
>
> The story has already been told in detail in Surah **Hud**, and there is no need to repeat it here.

فَإِذَا اسْتَوَيْتَ أَنتَ وَمَن مَّعَكَ عَلَى الْفُلْكِ فَقُلِ ...

And when you have embarked on the ship, you and whoever is with you, then say:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي نَجَّانَا مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ

`All the praise be to Allah, Who has saved us from the people who are wrongdoers.'

This is like the **Ayah**:

وَالَّذِى خَلَقَ الأَزْوَجَ كُلَّهَا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الْفُلْكِ وَالاٌّنْعَـمِ مَا تَرْكَبُونَ

لِتَسْتَوُواْ عَلَى ظُهُورِهِ ثُمَّ تَذْكُرُواْ نِعْمَةَ رَبِّكُمْ إِذَا اسْتَوَيْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ وَتَقُولُواْ سُبْحَـنَ الَّذِى سَخَّرَ لَنَا هَـذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهُ مُقْرِنِينَ

وَإِنَّآ إِلَى رَبِّنَا لَمُنقَلِبُونَ

and has appointed for you ships and cattle on which you ride: In order that you may mount on their backs, and then may remember the favor of your Lord when you mount thereon, and say: "Glory to Him Who has subjected this to us, and we could never have it (by our efforts). And verily, to Our Lord we indeed are to return!'' (43:12-14)

So, certainly, Nuh adhered to what he was commanded, as Allah says elsewhere:

وَقَالَ ارْكَبُواْ فِيهَا بِسْمِ اللَّهِ مَجْرَاهَا وَمُرْسَاهَا

And he said: "Embark therein: in the Name of Allah will be its (moving) course and its (resting) anchorage...'' (11:41)

So Nuh mentioned Allah at the beginning of his journey and at the end, and Allah said:

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَنزِلْنِي مُنزَلًا مُّبَارَكًا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الْمُنزِلِينَ (٢٩)

And say: `My Lord! Cause me to land at a blessed landing place, for You are the Best of those who bring to land.''

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ ...

Verily in this, there are indeed **Ayat**,

> means in this event, which is the saving of the believers and the destruction of the disbelievers there are signs, i.e., clear evidence and proof that the Prophets speak the truth in the Message they bring from Allah, may He be exalted, and that Allah does what He wills, and He is able to do all things and knows all things.

... وَإِن كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ (٣٠)

for sure We are ever putting (men) to the test.

> means, `We try Our servants by means of sending the Messengers.'

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْناً ءَاخَرِينَ

23:31 Then, after them, We created another generation.

فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ رَسُولاً مِّنْهُمْ أَنِ اعْبُدُواْ اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ إِلَـهٍ غَيْرُهُ

23:32 And We sent to them a Messenger from among themselves (saying): "Worship Allah! You have no other God but Him.

أَفَلاَ تَتَّقُونَ

Will you not then have Taqwa!''

وَقَالَ الْمَلأُ مِن قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ وَكَذَّبُواْ بِلِقَآءِ الاٌّخِرَةِ وَأَتْرَفْنَـهُمْ فِى الْحَيَـوةِ الدُّنْيَا

23:33 And the chiefs of his people who disbelieved and denied the meeting in the Hereafter, and whom We had given the luxuries and comforts of worldly life, said:

مَا هَـذَا إِلاَّ بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ

"He is no more than a human being like you, he eats of that which you eat, and drinks of what you drink.''

وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُم بَشَرًا مِثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَّخَاسِرُونَ

23:34 "If you were to obey a human being like yourselves, then verily, you indeed would be losers.''

أَيَعِدُكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِتٌّمْ وَكُنتُمْ تُرَاباً وَعِظـماً أَنَّكُمْ مُّخْرَجُونَ

23:35 "Does he promise you that when you have died and have become dust and bones, you shall come out alive!''

هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ لِمَا تُوعَدُونَ

23:36 "Far, very far is that which you are promised!''

إِنْ هِىَ إِلاَّ حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ

23:37 "There is nothing but our life of this world! We die and we live! And we are not going to be resurrected!''

إِنْ هُوَ إِلاَّ رَجُلٌ افتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِباً وَمَا نَحْنُ لَهُ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

23:38 "He is only a man who has invented a lie against Allah, and we are not going to believe in him.''

قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِى بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ

23:39 He said: "O my Lord! Help me because they deny me.''

قَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَّيُصْبِحُنَّ نَـدِمِينَ

23:40 (Allah) said: "In a little while, they are sure to be regretful.''

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ بِالْحَقِّ فَجَعَلْنَـهُمْ غُثَآءً

23:41 So, the Sayhah overtook them in truth, and We made them as rubbish of dead plants.

فَبُعْداً لِّلْقَوْمِ الظَّـلِمِينَ

So, away with the people who are wrongdoers.

The Story of `Ad or Thamud

Allah tells:

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِمْ قَرْنًا آخَرِينَ (٣١)

فَأَرْسَلْنَا فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (٣٢)

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِن قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِلِقَاء الْآخِرَةِ وَأَتْرَفْنَاهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يَأْكُلُ مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ (٣٣)

وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُم بَشَرًا مِثْلَكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ إِذًا لَّخَاسِرُونَ (٣٤)

Then, after them, We created another generation. And We sent to them a Messenger from among themselves (saying): "Worship Allah! You have no other God but Him. Will you not then have **Taqwa**!''

And the chiefs of his people who disbelieved and denied the meeting in the Hereafter, and whom We had given the luxuries and comforts of worldly life, said: "He is no more than a human being like you, he eats of that which you eat, and drinks of what you drink. If you were to obey a human being like yourselves, then verily, you indeed would be losers.''

Allah tells us that after the people of Nuh, He created another nation.

It was said that this was **`Ad**, because they were the successors of the people of Nuh.

Or it was said that they were **Thamud**, because Allah says: فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ بِالْحَقِّ (So, the **Sayhah** overtook them in truth).

Allah sent to them a Messenger from among themselves, and he called them to worship Allah Alone with no partner or associate, but they belied him, opposed him and refused to follow him because he was a human being like them, and they refused to follow a human Messenger. They did not believe in the meeting with Allah on the Day of Resurrection and they denied the idea of physical resurrection.

They said:

أَيَعِدُكُمْ أَنَّكُمْ إِذَا مِتُّمْ وَكُنتُمْ تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَنَّكُم مُّخْرَجُونَ (٣٥)

هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ لِمَا تُوعَدُونَ (٣٦)

"Does he promise you that when you have died and have become dust and bones, you shall come out alive (resurrected)! Far, very far is that which you are promised!

meaning, very unlikely.

إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَبْعُوثِينَ (٣٧)

There is nothing but our life of this world! We die and we live! And we are not going to be resurrected!

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ...

He is only a man who has invented a lie against Allah,

meaning, `in the Message he has brought to you, and his warnings and promise of resurrection.'

... وَمَا نَحْنُ لَهُ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ (٣٨)

قَالَ رَبِّ انصُرْنِي بِمَا كَذَّبُونِ (٣٩)

and we are not going to believe in him."

He said: "O my Lord! Help me because they deny me.''

meaning, the Messenger prayed against his people and asked his Lord to help him against them.

His Lord answered his prayer:

قَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَيُصْبِحُنَّ نَادِمِينَ (٤٠)

(Allah) said: "In a little while, they are sure to be regretful.''

meaning, `for their opposition towards you and their stubborn rejection of the Message you brought to them.'

فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ بِالْحَقِّ ...

So, The **Sayhah** overtook them in truth,

meaning, they deserved that from Allah because of their disbelief and wrongdoing. The apparent meaning is that the **Sayhah** was combined with the furious cold wind,

تُدَمِّرُ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ بِأَمْرِ رَبِّهَا فَأْصْبَحُواْ لاَ يُرَى إِلاَّ مَسَـكِنُهُمْ

Destroying everything by the command of its Lord! So they became such that nothing

could be seen except their dwellings! (46:25)

... فَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ غُثَاء ...

and We made them as rubbish of dead plants.

means, they are dead and destroyed, like the scum and rubbish left by a flood, i.e., something insignificant and useless that is of no benefit to anyone.

... فَبُعْدًا لِّلْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (٤١)

So, away with the people who are wrongdoers.

As Allah's statement:

وَمَا ظَلَمْنَـهُمْ وَلَـكِن كَانُواْ هُمُ الظَّـلِمِينَ

We wronged them not, but they were the wrongdoers. (43:76)

means, who are wrongdoers because of their disbelief and stubborn opposition to the Messenger of Allah, so let those who hear this beware of disbelieving in their Messengers.

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُوناً ءَاخَرِينَ

23:42 Then, after them, We created other generations.

مَّا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَـْخِرُونَ

23:43 No nation can advance their term, nor can they delay it.

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَى

23:44 Then We sent Our Messengers in succession.

كُلَّ مَا جَآءَ أُمَّةً رَّسُولُهَا كَذَّبُوهُ فَأَتْبَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ بَعْضاً وَجَعَلْنَـهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ فَبُعْداً لِّقَوْمٍ لاَّ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Every time there came to a nation their Messenger, they denied him; so, We made them follow one another, and We made them as Ahadith. So, away with a people who believe not!

Mention of Other Nations

Allah says:

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِن بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُونًا آخَرِينَ (٤٢)

Then, after them, We created other generations.

meaning, nations and peoples.

مَا تَسْبِقُ مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ (٤٣)

No nation can advance their term, nor can they delay it.

means, they are taken at the appropriate time, as decreed by Allah in His Book that is preserved with Him, before they were created, nation after nation, century after century, generation after generation, successors after predecessors.

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرَا ...

Then We sent Our Messengers in succession.

Ibn Abbas said,

"(This means) following one another in succession.''

This is like the **Ayah**:

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِى كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَّسُولاً أَنِ اعْبُدُواْ اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُواْ الْطَّـغُوتَ فَمِنْهُم مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَـلَةُ

And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger (proclaiming):

"Worship Allah, and avoid **Taghut** (all false deities)."

Then of them were some whom Allah guided and of them were some upon whom the straying was justified. (16:36)

... كُلَّ مَا جَاء أُمَّةً رَّسُولُهَا كَذَّبُوهُ ...

Every time there came to a nation their Messenger, they denied him;

meaning the greater majority of them.

This is like the **Ayah**:

يحَسْرَةً عَلَى الْعِبَادِ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِّن رَّسُولٍ إِلاَّ كَانُواْ بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ

Alas for mankind! There never came a Messenger to them but they used to mock at him. (36:30)

... فَأَتْبَعْنَا بَعْضَهُم بَعْضًا ...

so We made them follow one another,

means, `We destroyed them,' as Allah says:

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِنَ الْقُرُونِ مِن بَعْدِ نُوحٍ

And how many generations have We destroyed after Nuh! (17:17)

... وَجَعَلْنَاهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ ...

and We made them as **Ahadith**,

meaning, stories and lessons for mankind, as Allah says elsewhere:

فَجَعَلْنَـهُمْ أَحَادِيثَ وَمَزَّقْنَـهُمْ كُلَّ مُمَزَّقٍ

so, We made them as tales (in the land), and We dispersed them all totally. (34:19)

... فَبُعْدًا لِّقَوْمٍ لَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ (٤٤)

So, away with a people who believe not!

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَى وَأَخَاهُ هَـرُونَ بِـَايَـتِنَا وَسُلْطَـنٍ مُّبِينٍ

23:45 Then We sent Musa and his brother Harun, with Our Ayat and manifest authority,

إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَاسْتَكْبَرُواْ وَكَانُواْ قَوْماً عَـلِينَ

23:46 To Fir`awn and his chiefs, but they behaved insolently and they were people self-exalting (by disobeying their Lord).

فَقَالُواْ أَنُؤْمِنُ لِبَشَرَيْنِ مِثْلِنَا وَقَوْمُهُمَا لَنَا عَـبِدُونَ

23:47 They said: "Shall we believe in two men like ourselves, and their people are obedient to us with humility!''

فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَكَانُواْ مِنَ الْمُهْلَكِينَ

23:48 So, they denied them both and became of those who were destroyed.

وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَـبَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ

23:49 And indeed We gave Musa the Scripture, that they may be guided.

The Story of Musa, Peace be upon Him; and Fir`awn

Allah tells:

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَى وَأَخَاهُ هَارُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ (٤٥)

إِلَى فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَئِهِ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا عَالِينَ (٤٦)

فَقَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ لِبَشَرَيْنِ مِثْلِنَا وَقَوْمُهُمَا لَنَا عَابِدُونَ (٤٧)

فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَكَانُوا مِنَ الْمُهْلَكِينَ (٤٨)

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ (٤٩)

Then We sent Musa and his brother Harun, with Our **Ayat** and manifest authority, to Fir`awn and his chiefs, but they behaved insolently and they were people self-exalting (by disobeying their Lord). They said:

"Shall we believe in two men like ourselves, and their people are obedient to us with humility!''

So, they denied them both and became of those who were destroyed. And indeed We gave Musa the Scripture, that they may be guided.

> Allah tells us that He sent Musa, peace be upon him, and his brother Harun to Fir`awn and his chiefs with decisive evidence and definitive proof, but Fir`awn and his people were too arrogant to follow them and obey their commands because they were human beings, just as previous nations had denied the Message of the human Messengers. They were of a similar mentality, so Allah destroyed Fir`awn and his chiefs, drowning them all in one day. He revealed the Book to Musa, i.e., the **Tawrah**, in which were rulings, commands and prohibitions, after He had destroyed Fir`awn and the Egyptians and seized them with a punishment of the All-Mighty, All-Capable to carry out what He wills.

After Allah revealed the **Tawrah**, Allah did not destroy any nation with an overwhelming calamity; instead, He commanded the believers to fight the disbelievers, as He says:

> وَلَقَدْ ءَاتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَـبَ مِن بَعْدِ مَآ أَهْلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ الاٍّولَى بَصَآئِرَ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ
>
> And indeed We gave Musa -- after We had destroyed the generations of old -- the Scripture as an enlightenment for mankind, and a guidance and a mercy, that they might remember. (28:43)

وَجَعَلْنَا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ ءَايَةً وَءَاوَيْنَـهُمَآ إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ

23:50 And We made the son of Maryam and his mother as a sign, and We gave them refuge on a Rabwah, Dhat Qarar, and Ma`in.

`Isa and Maryam

Allah tells:

وَجَعَلْنَا ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ آيَةً ...

And We made the son of Maryam and his mother as a sign,

Allah tells us about His servant and Messenger `Isa bin Maryam, peace be upon them both, and that He made them as a sign for mankind, i.e., definitive proof of His ability to do what He wills. For He created Adam without a father or a mother, He created **Hawwa**' from a male without a female, and He created `Isa from a female without a male, but He created the rest of mankind from both male and female.

... وَآوَيْنَاهُمَا إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ (٥٠)

and We gave them refuge on high ground, a place of rest, security and flowing streams.

Ad-Dahhak reported that Ibn Abbas said:

"**Ar-Rabwah** is a raised portion of land, which is the best place for vegetation to grow.''

This was also the view of Mujahid, Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr and Qatadah.

Ibn Abbas said,

ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ (**Dhat Qarar**) "A fertile place.

وَمَعِينٍ (and **Ma`in**) means water running on the surface.''

This was also the view of Mujahid, Ikrimah, Sa`id bin Jubayr and Qatadah.

Mujahid said:

"A level hill.''

Sa`id bin Jubayr said that ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ (**Dhat Qarar and Ma`in**) means,

that water was flowing gently through it.

Mujahid and Qatadah said:

وَمَعِينٍ (and **Ma`in**), "Running water.''

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded from Sa`id bin Al-Musayyib: وَآوَيْنَاهُمَا إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ (and We gave them refuge on a **Rabwah**, **Dhat Qarar** and **Ma`in**).

"It is Damascus.''

He said;

"Something similar was also narrated from Abdullah bin Salam, Al-Hasan, Zayd bin Aslam and Khalid bin Ma`dan.''

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded from Ikrimah from Ibn Abbas that;

this **Ayah** referred to the rivers of Damascus.

Layth bin Abi Sulaym narrated from Mujahid that the words; وَآوَيْنَاهُمَا إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ (and We gave them refuge on a **Rabwah**),

referred to `Isa bin Maryam and his mother when they sought refuge in Damascus and the flatlands around it.

Abdur-Razzaq recorded that Abu Hurayrah said: إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ (on a **Rabwah**, **Dhat Qarar** and **Ma`in**),

"It is **Ramlah** in Palestine.''

The most correct opinion on this matter is that which was reported by Al-Awfi from Ibn Abbas, who said; وَآوَيْنَاهُمَا إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ (and We gave them refuge on a **Rabwah, Dhat Qarar** and **Ma`in**),

"**Ma`in** refers to running water, and is the river of which Allah mentioned:

قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيّاً

your Lord has provided a water stream under you.'' (19:24)

Ad-Dahhak and Qatadah said; إِلَى رَبْوَةٍ ذَاتِ قَرَارٍ وَمَعِينٍ (on a high ground, a place of rest, security and flowing streams),

refers to Jerusalem.

This -- and Allah knows best -- is the most apparent meaning, because it is mentioned in the other **Ayah**, and parts of the Qur'an explain other parts, so it is more appropriate to interpret it by another **Ayah**, then the **Sahih Hadiths**, then other reports.

يأَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُواْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَـتِ وَاعْمَلُواْ صَـلِحاً إِنِّى بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ

23:51 O Messengers! Eat of the Tayyibat and do righteous deeds. Verily, I am Well-Acquainted with what you do.

وَإِنَّ هَـذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَحِدَةً وَأَنَاْ رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ

23:52 And verily, this your religion is one religion, and I am your Lord, so have Taqwa.''

فَتَقَطَّعُوٓاْ أَمْرَهُمْ بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُراً كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ

23:53 But they have broken their religion among them into sects, each group rejoicing in what is with it.

فَذَرْهُمْ فِى غَمْرَتِهِمْ حَتَّى حِينٍ

23:54 So, leave them in their error for a time.

أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُمْ بِهِ مِن مَّالٍ وَبَنِينَ

23:55 Do they think that in wealth and children with which We prolong them,

نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِى الْخَيْرَتِ بَل لاَّ يَشْعُرُونَ

23:56 We hasten unto them with good things. Nay, but they perceive not.

The Command to eat Lawful Food and to do Righteous Deeds

Allah commands:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ ...

O Messengers!

Allah commands His servants and Messengers, peace be upon them all, to eat lawful food and do righteous deeds, which indicates that eating what is lawful helps one to do righteous deeds. The Prophets, peace be upon them, did this in the most perfect manner, and did all kinds of good deeds in words, actions, guidance and advice. May Allah reward them with good on behalf of the people.

... كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ ...

Eat of the **Tayyibat**,

Sa`id bin Jubayr and Ad-Dahhak said,

"This means lawful."

In the **Sahih** it says:

وَمَا مِنْ نَبِيَ إِلَّا رَعَى الْغَنَم

There is no Prophet who was not a shepherd.

They asked, "And you, O Messenger of Allah!''

He said,

نَعَمْ، كُنْتُ أَرْعَاهَا عَلَى قَرَارِيطَ لِأَهْلِ مَكَّة

Yes, I used to tend the sheep of the people of Makkah for a few **Qirats**.

In the **Sahih**, it says:

إِنَّ دَاوُدَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ كَانَ يَأْكُلُ مِنْ كَسْبِ يَدِه

Dawud, upon him be peace, used to eat from the earnings of his own hand.

It was recorded in Sahih Muslim, Jami` At-Tirmidhi and Musnad Al-Imam Ahmad -- from whom this version comes -- that Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, said,

"The Messenger of Allah said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا، وَإِنَّ اللهَ أَمَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِمَا أَمَرَ بِهِ الْمُرْسَلِين

O people, Allah is **Tayyib** and only accepts that which is **Tayyib**, and Allah commands the believers as He had commanded the Messengers by saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ (٥١)

O Messengers! Eat of the **Tayyibat** and do righteous deeds. Verily, I am Well-Acquainted with what you do.

and

يـأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ كُلُوا۟ مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَـكُمْ

O you who believe! Eat of the **Tayyibat** that We have provided you with. (2:172)

Then he mentioned how a man may travel on a long journey, dusty and unkempt,

وَمَطْعَمُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَشْرَبُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَمَلْبَسُهُ حَرَامٌ، وَغُذِّيَ بِالْحَرَامِ
يَمُدُّ يَدَيْهِ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ: يَا رَبِّ يَا رَبِّ فَأَنَّى يُسْتَجَابُ لِذَلِك

and his food, drink and clothing are unlawful, and he has nourished himself with what is unlawful, and he extends his hands towards the sky, saying, `O Lord, O Lord!' -- how can his prayer be answered.

At-Tirmidhi said that it is "**Hasan Gharib**.''

The Religion of all the Prophets is Tawhid; and the Warning against splitting into different Groups

Allah tells:

وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّتُكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً ...

And verily, this your religion is one religion,

means, `your religion, O Prophets, is one religion and one group, which is the call to worship Allah Alone with no partner or associate.'

Allah said:

... وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ (٥٢)

and I am your Lord, so have **Taqwa**.

We have already discussed this in Surah **Al-Anbiya'**.

The phrase أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً (one nation) is descriptive.

فَتَقَطَّعُوا أَمْرَهُم بَيْنَهُمْ زُبُرًا ...

But they have broken their religion among them into sects,

the nations to whom Prophets were sent.

... كُلُّ حِزْبٍ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ فَرِحُونَ (٥٣)

each group rejoicing in what is with it.

means, they rejoice in their misguidance because they think that they are rightly-guided.

Allah says, threatening and warning:

فَذَرْهُمْ فِي غَمْرَتِهِمْ ...

So, leave them in their error,

meaning their misguidance,

... حَتَّى حِينٍ (٥٤)

for a time.

means, until the appointed time of their destruction comes.

This is like the **Ayah**:

فَمَهِّلِ الْكَـفِرِينَ أَمْهِلْهُمْ رُوَيْداً

So give a respite to the disbelievers; deal gently with them for a while. (86:17)

And Allah says:

ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُواْ وَيَتَمَتَّعُواْ وَيُلْهِهِمُ الأَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ

Leave them to eat and enjoy, and let them be preoccupied with (false) hope. They will come to know! (15:3)

أَيَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُم بِهِ مِن مَّالٍ وَبَنِينَ (٥٥)

نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ بَل لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ (٥٦)

Do they think that in wealth and children with which We prolong them, We hasten unto them with good things. Nay, but they perceive not.

> means, `do these deceived people think that what We give them of wealth and children is because they are honored and precious in Our sight! No, the matter is not as they claim when they say,
>
> نَحْنُ أَكْثَـرُ أَمْوَلاً وَأَوْلَـداً وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ
>
> We are more in wealth and in children, and we are not going to be punished. (34:35)
>
> But this thinking is wrong, and their hopes will be dashed. We only give those things to them in order to make them go further (in sin) and to give them more time.'

Allah says:

نُسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ

... بَل لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ

but they perceive not.

as He says elsewhere:

> فَلاَ تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَلُهُمْ وَلاَ أَوْلَـدُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا فِي الْحَيَوةِ الدُّنْيَا
>
> So, let not their wealth nor their children amaze you; in reality Allah's plan is to punish them with these things in the life of this world... (9:55)
>
> إِنَّمَا نُمْلِى لَهُمْ لِيَزْدَادُواْ إِثْمَاً
>
> We postpone the punishment only so that they may increase in sinfulness. (3:178)
>
> فَذَرْنِى وَمَن يُكَذِّبُ بِهَـذَا الْحَدِيثِ سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُم مِّنْ حَيْثُ لاَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَأُمْلِى لَهُمْ

Then leave Me Alone with such as belie this Qur'an. We shall punish them gradually from directions they perceive not. And I will grant them a respite. (68:44-45)

ذَرْنِى وَمَنْ خَلَقْتُ وَحِيداً

Leave Me Alone (to deal) with whom I created lonely. until His saying: عَنِيداً (opposing). (74: 11-16)

وَمَآ أَمْوَلُكُمْ وَلاَ أَوْلَـدُكُمْ بِالَّتِى تُقَرِّبُكُمْ عِندَنَا زُلْفَى إِلاَّ مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَـلِحاً

And it is not your wealth, nor your children that bring you nearer to Us, but only he who believes, and does righteous deeds... (34:37)

And there are many other **Ayat** which say similar things.

Imam Ahmad recorded that Abdullah bin Mas`ud said,

"The Messenger of Allah said:

إِنَّ اللهَ قَسَمَ بَيْنَكُمْ أَخْلَاقَكُمْ كَمَا قَسَمَ بَيْنَكُمْ أَرْزَاقَكُمْ، وَإِنَّ اللهَ يُعْطِي الدُّنْيَا مَنْ يُحِبُّ وَمَنْ لَا يُحِبُّ، وَلَا يُعْطِي الدِّينَ إِلَّا لِمَنْ أَحَبَّ، فَمَنْ أَعْطَاهُ اللهُ الدِّينَ فَقَدْ أَحَبَّهُ،

وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا يُسْلِمُ عَبْدٌ حَتَّى يَسْلَمَ قَلْبُهُ وَلِسَانُهُ، وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ حَتَّى يَأْمَنَ جَارُهُ بَوَائِقَه

Allah has distributed your behavior to you just as He has distributed your provision. Allah gives the things of this world to those whom He loves and those whom He does not love, but He only gives religious commitment to those whom He loves. Whoever is given religious commitment by Allah is loved by Him.

By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, no servant truly submits until his heart and his tongue

submit, and he does not truly believe until his neighbor is safe from his harm.

They said, `What is his harm, O Messenger of Allah!'

He said,

غَشْمُهُ وَظُلْمُهُ، وَلَا يَكْسِبُ عَبْدٌ مَالًا مِنْ حَرَامٍ فَيُنْفِقَ مِنْهُ فَيُبَارَكَ لَهُ فِيهِ، وَلَا يَتَصَدَّقُ بِهِ فَيُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ، وَلَا يَتْرُكُهُ خَلْفَ ظَهْرِهِ إِلَّا كَانَ زَادَهُ إِلَى النَّارِ،

إِنَّ اللهَ لَا يَمْحُو السَّيِّءَ بِالسَّيِّءِ وَلَكِنْ يَمْحُو السَّيِّءَ بِالْحَسَنِ، إِنَّ الْخَبِيثَ لَا يَمْحُو الْخَبِيث

His wrongdoing and misbehavior. No person who earns unlawful wealth and spends it will be blessed in that; if he gives it in charity, it will not be accepted from him and if he leaves it behind (when he dies), it will be his provision in the Fire.

Allah does not wash away an evil deed with another, but he washes away evil deeds with good deeds, for impurity cannot wash away with another impurity.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُم مِّنْ خَشْيةِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُونَ

23:57 Verily, those who live in awe for fear of their Lord;

وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِـَايَـتِ رَبَّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ

23:58 And those who believe in the Ayat of their Lord;

وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِرَبِّهِمْ لاَ يُشْرِكُونَ

23:59 And those who join not anyone as partners with their Lord;

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَآ ءاتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ رَجِعُونَ

23:60 And those who give that which they give with their hearts full of fear, because they are sure to return to their Lord.

أُوْلَـئِكَ يُسَـرِعُونَ فِى الْخَيْرَتِ وَهُمْ لَهَا سَـبِقُونَ

23:61 It is these who hasten in the good deeds, and they are foremost in them.

Description of the People of Good Deeds

Allah says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ هُم مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ رَبِّهِم مُّشْفِقُونَ (٥٧)

Verily, those who live in awe for fear of their Lord;

means, even though they have reached the level of **Ihsan** and have faith and do righteous deeds, they are still in awe of Allah and fear Him and His hidden plans for them, as Al-Hasan Al-Basri said,

"The believer combines **Ihsan** with awe, while the disbelievers combine evil deeds with a sense of security.''

وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ (٥٨)

And those who believe in the **Ayat** of their Lord;

means, they believe in His universal and legislative signs, as Allah says about Maryam, peace be upon her:

وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَـتِ رَبَّهَا وَكُتُبِهِ

and she testified to the truth of the Words of her Lord, and His Scriptures. (66:12),

meaning that she believed that whatever existed was by the will and decree of Allah, and that whatever Allah decreed, if it was a command, it would be something that He liked and accepted; if it was a prohibition, it would be something that He disliked and rejected; and if it was good, it would be true.

This is like the **Ayah**:

وَالَّذِينَ هُم بِرَبِّهِمْ لَا يُشْرِكُونَ (٥٩)

And those who join not anyone (in worship) as partners with their Lord;

meaning, they do not worship anyone or anything else besides Him, but they worship Him Alone and know that there is no god except Allah Alone, the One, the Self-Sufficient Master, Who does not take a wife or have any offspring, and there is none comparable or equal unto Him.

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ رَاجِعُونَ (٦٠)

And those who give that which they give with their hearts full of fear, because they are sure to return to their Lord.

means, they give in charity, fearing that it may not be accepted from them because of some shortcoming or failure to meet the required conditions of giving.

This has to do with fear and taking precautions, as Imam Ahmad recorded from A'ishah:

I said:

"O Messenger of Allah, وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْتُونَ مَا آتَوا وَّقُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَةٌ (And those who give that which they give with their hearts full of fear...),

Are these the ones who steal and commit **Zina** and drink alcohol while fearing Allah!''

The Messenger of Allah replied:

لَا، يَا بِنْتَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ يَا بِنْتَ الصِّدِّيقِ، وَلَكِنَّهُ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي وَيَصُومُ وَيَتَصَدَّقُ وَهُوَ يَخَافُ اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَل

No, O daughter of Abu Bakr. O daughter of As-Siddiq, the one who prays, fast and gives in charity, fearing Allah.

This was recorded by At-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Abi Hatim recorded something similar in which the Prophet said:

لَا يَا بِنْتَ الصِّدِّيقِ، وَلَكِنَّهُمُ الَّذِينَ يُصَلُّونَ وَيَصُومُونَ وَيَتَصَدَّقُونَ وَهُمْ يَخَافُونَ أَلَّا يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ:

No, O daughter of As-Siddiq, they are the ones who pray and fast and give in charity while fearing that it will not be accepted from them,

أُوْلَئِكَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ ...

It is these who hasten in the good deeds.

This is also how Ibn Abbas, Muhammad bin Ka`b Al-Qurazi and Al-Hasan Al-Basri interpreted this **Ayah**.

... وَهُمْ لَهَا سَابِقُونَ (٦١)

and they are foremost in them.

وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْساً إِلاَّ وُسْعَهَا وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَابٌ يَنطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

23:62 And We task not any person except according to his capacity, and with Us is a Record which speaks the truth, and they will not be wronged.

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِى غَمْرَةٍ مِّنْ هَـذَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَـلٌ مِّن دُونِ ذَلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عَـمِلُونَ

23:63 Nay, but their hearts are covered from this, and they have other deeds, besides which they are doing.

حَتَّى إِذَآ أَخَذْنَا مُتْرَفِيهِمْ بِالْعَذَابِ إِذَا هُمْ يَجْـَرُونَ

23:64 Until when We seize those of them who lead a luxurious life with punishment; behold, they make humble invocation with a loud voice.

لاَ تَجْـَرُواْ الْيَوْمَ إِنَّكُمْ مِّنَّا لاَ تُنصَرُونَ

23:65 Invoke not loudly this day! Certainly you shall not be helped by Us.

قَدْ كَانَتْ ءَايَـتِى تُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَـبِكُمْ تَنكِصُونَ

23:66 Indeed My Ayat used to be recited to you, but you used to turn back on your heels.

مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ بِهِ سَـمِراً تَهْجُرُونَ

23:67 In pride, talking evil about it by night.

The Justice of Allah and the Frivolity of the Idolators

Allah tells;

وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ...

And We task not any person except according to his capacity,

Allah tells us of His justice towards His servants in this world, in that He does not task any person

except according to his capacity, i.e., He does not burden any soul with more than it can bear. On the Day of Resurrection He will call them to account for their deeds, which He has recorded in a written Book from which nothing is omitted.

He says:

... وَلَدَيْنَا كِتَابٌ يَنطِقُ بِالْحَقِّ ...

and with Us is a Record which speaks the truth,

meaning, the Book of deeds

... وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (٦٢)

and they will not be wronged.

means, nothing will be omitted from their record of good deeds. As for evil deeds, He will forgive and overlook many of them in the case of His believing servants.

Then Allah says, denouncing the disbelievers and idolators of the Quraysh:

بَلْ قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي غَمْرَةٍ ...

Nay, but their hearts are covered,

meaning because of negligence and misguidance,

... مِّنْ هَذَا ...

from this.

means, the Qur'an which Allah revealed to His Messenger.

... وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَالٌ مِن دُونِ ذَلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عَامِلُونَ (٦٣)

and they have other deeds, besides which they are doing.

Al-Hakam bin Aban narrated from Ikrimah, from Ibn Abbas that;

وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَالٌ (and they have other deeds),

means, evil deeds apart from that, i.e., **Shirk**,

هُمْ لَهَا عَامِلُونَ (which they are doing),

means, which they will inevitably do.

This was also narrated from Mujahid, Al-Hasan and others.

Others said that this phrase وَلَهُمْ أَعْمَالٌ مِن دُونِ ذَلِكَ هُمْ لَهَا عَامِلُونَ (And they have other deeds, besides which they are doing), means:

It was decreed that they would do evil deeds, and they will inevitably do them before they die, so that the word of punishment may be justified against them.

A similar view was narrated from Muqatil bin Hayyan, As-Suddi and Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam.

This is a clear and appropriate meaning. We have already quoted from the **Hadith** of Ibn Mas`ud:

فَوَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ حَتَّى مَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهَا إِلَّا ذِرَاعٌ، فَيَسْبِقُ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابُ فَيَعْمَلُ بِعَمَلِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ فَيَدْخُلُهَا

By Him besides Whom there is no other God, a man may do the deeds of the people of Paradise until there is no more than a forearm's length between him and it, then the decree will overtake him and he will do the deeds of the people of Hell, then he will enter Hell...

حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذْنَا مُتْرَفِيهِم بِالْعَذَابِ إِذَا هُمْ يَجْأَرُونَ (٦٤)

Until when We seize those of them who lead a luxurious life with punishment; behold, they make humble invocation with a loud voice.

means, when the punishment and vengeance of Allah comes to those who are living a happy life of luxury in this world and overtakes them,

إِذَا هُمْ يَجْأَرُونَ (behold, they make humble invocation with a loud voice).

means, they scream their calls for help.

This is like the **Ayat**:

وَذَرْنِى وَالْمُكَذِّبِينَ أُوْلِى النَّعْمَةِ وَمَهِّلْهُمْ قَلِيلاً

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَآ أَنكَالاً وَجَحِيماً

And leave Me Alone (to deal) with the beliers, those who are in possession of good things of life. And give them respite for a little while. Verily, with Us are fetters, and a raging Fire. (73:11-12)

كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا مِن قَبْلِهِم مِّن قَرْنٍ فَنَادَواْ وَّلاَتَ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ

How many a generation have We destroyed before them! And they cried out when there was no longer time for escape. (38:3)

لَا تَجْأَرُوا الْيَوْمَ إِنَّكُم مِّنَّا لَا تُنصَرُونَ (٦٥)

Invoke not loudly this day! Certainly you shall not be helped by Us.

means, no one is going to save you from what has happened to you, whether you scream aloud or remain silent. There is no escape and no way out. It is inevitable: the punishment will surely come to you.

Then Allah mentions the greatest of their sins:

قَدْ كَانَتْ آيَاتِي تُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ تَنكِصُونَ (٦٦)

Indeed My **Ayat** used to be recited to you, but you used to turn back on your heels.

meaning, when you were called, you refused and resisted.

ذَٰلِكُم بِأَنَّهُۥٓ إِذَا دُعِىَ ٱللَّهُ وَحْدَهُۥ كَفَرْتُمْ ۖ وَإِن يُشْرَكْ بِهِۦ تُؤْمِنُوا۟ ۚ فَٱلْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ ٱلْعَلِىِّ ٱلْكَبِيرِ

"This is because, when Allah Alone was invoked, you disbelieved, but when partners were joined to Him, you believed! So the judgment is only with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great!'' (40:12)

مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ بِهِ سَامِرًا تَهْجُرُونَ (٦٧)

In pride, talking evil about it by night.

refers to the arrogant pride which the Quraysh felt because they believed themselves to be the guardians of the **Ka`bah**, when in fact this was not the case.

As An-Nasa'i said in his **Tafsir** of this **Ayah** in his **Sunan**:

Ahmad bin Sulayman told us that Ubaydullah told us from Isra`il, from Abdul-A`la that he heard Sa`id bin Jubayr narrating that Ibn Abbas said,

"Talking by late night became disapproved of when this Ayah was revealed:

مُسْتَكْبِرِينَ بِهِ سَامِرًا تَهْجُرُونَ

In pride, talking evil about it by night.

He said,

"They boasted about the **Ka`bah** and said, `We are its people who stay up talking at night.'

They used to boast and stay up and talk at night around the **Ka`bah**. They did not use it for the proper purpose, and so in effect they had abandoned it.''

أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُواْ الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَآءَهُمْ مَّا لَمْ يَأْتِ ءَابَآءَهُمُ الاٌّوَّلِينَ

23:68 Have they not pondered over the Word, or has there come to them what had not come to their fathers of old,

أَمْ لَمْ يَعْرِفُواْ رَسُولَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَهُ مُنكِرُونَ

23:69 Or is it that they did not recognize their Messenger so they deny him!

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ

23:70 Or they say: There is madness in him!

بَلْ جَآءَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَـرِهُونَ

Nay, but he brought them the truth, but most of them are averse to the truth.

وَلَوِ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَآءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَـوَتُ وَالاٌّرْضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّ

23:71 And if Al-Haqq had followed their desires, verily, the heavens and the earth, and whosoever is therein would have been corrupted!

بَلْ أَتَيْنَـهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَن ذِكْرِهِمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ

Nay, We have brought them their reminder, but they turn away from their reminder.

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ خَرْجاً

23:72 Or is it that you ask them for some Kharj!

فَخَرَاجُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرزِقِينَ

But the recompense of your Lord is better, and He is the Best of those who give sustenance.

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى صِرطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

23:73 And certainly, you call them to the straight path.

وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالاٌّخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرطِ لَنَـكِبُونَ

23:74 And verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter are indeed deviating far astray from the path.

وَلَوْ رَحِمْنَـهُمْ وَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِمْ مِّن ضُرٍّ لَّلَجُّواْ فِى طُغْيَـنِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

23:75 And though We had mercy on them and removed the distress which is on them, still they would obstinately persist in their transgression, wandering blindly.

Refutation and Condemnation of the Idolators

Allah says;

أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ أَمْ جَاءهُم مَّا لَمْ يَأْتِ آبَاءهُمُ الْأَوَّلِينَ (٦٨)

Have they not pondered over the Word, or has there come to them what had not come to their fathers of old,

Allah denounces the idolators for not understanding the Qur'an or contemplating its meaning, and for turning away from it, even though they had been addressed specifically in this Book which Allah did not reveal to any Messenger more perfect and noble, and especially since no Book or warner had come to their forefathers who had died during the **Jahiliyyah**.

What these people, upon whom the blessing had been bestowed, should have done, was to accept it and give thanks for it, and try to understand it and act in accordance with it night and day, as was done by the wise ones among them who became Muslim and followed the Messenger, may Allah be pleased with them.

أَفَلَمْ يَدَّبَّرُوا الْقَوْلَ ...

Have they not pondered over the Word,

Qatadah said,

> "Because, by Allah, if the people had pondered the meaning and understood it properly, they would have found in the Qur'an a deterrent to disobeying Allah. But they only paid attention to the **Ayat** which are not entirely clear, and so they were destroyed because of that.''

Then Allah says, denouncing the disbelievers of the Quraysh:

أَمْ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوا رَسُولَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَهُ مُنكِرُونَ (٦٩)

Or is it that they did not recognize their Messenger so they deny him,

> means, `do they not recognize Muhammad and the honesty, trustworthiness and good character with which he grew up among them! Can they deny that or argue against it!'
>
> Jafar bin Abi Talib said to An-Najashi, the king of Ethiopia:
>
> > "O King, Allah has sent to us a Messenger whose lineage, honesty and trustworthiness are known to us.''
>
> Al-Mughirah bin Shu`bah said something similar to the deputy of Kisra when he wanted to challenge him.
>
> When the Byzantine ruler Heraclius asked Abu Sufyan Sakhr bin Harb and his companions --

who were still disbelievers and had not yet become Muslim -- about the characteristics, lineage, honesty and trustworthiness of the Prophet, they could only tell the truth and admit that he was indeed noble and truthful.

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ ...

Or they say: There is madness in him,

This is a narration of what the Quraysh said about the Prophet.

They said that he was making up the Qur'an by himself, or that he was crazy and did not know what he was saying.

Allah tells us that their hearts did not believe that, they knew that what they were saying about the Qur'an was falsehood, for it had come to them from the Words of Allah and could not be resisted or rejected. So Allah challenged them and all the people of the world to produce something like it if they could -- but they could not and would never be able to do so.

So Allah says:

... بَلْ جَاءهُم بِالْحَقِّ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لِلْحَقِّ كَارِهُونَ (٧٠)

Nay, but he brought them **Al-Haqq**, but most of them are averse to the truth.

Truth does not follow Whims and Desires

Allah says;

وَلَوِ اتَّبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهِنَّ ...

And if **Al-Haqq** had followed their desires, verily, the heavens and the earth, and whosoever is therein would have been corrupted!

Mujahid, Abu Salih and As-Suddi said,

"**Al-Haqq** is Allah, may He be glorified.''

What is meant by the **Ayah** is that if Allah had responded to the desires in their hearts and prescribed things accordingly, the heavens and the earth and whosoever is therein, would have been corrupted, i.e., because of their corrupt and inconsistent desires.

As Allah says of them elsewhere:

لَوْلاَ نُزِّلَ هَـذَا الْقُرْءَانُ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِّنَ الْقَرْيَتَيْنِ عَظِيمٍ

"Why is not this Qur'an sent down to some great man of the two towns!'' (43:31)

Then He says:

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَةَ رَبِّكَ

Is it they who would portion out the mercy of your Lord! (43:32)

And Allah says:

قُل لَّوْ أَنتُمْ تَمْلِكُونَ خَزَآئِنَ رَحْمَةِ رَبِّى إِذًا لأمْسَكْتُمْ خَشْيَةَ الإِنفَاقِ

Say: "If you possessed the treasure of the mercy of my Lord, then you would surely hold back for fear of spending it.'' (17:100)

أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذاً لاَّ يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ نَقِيراً

Or have they a share in the dominion! Then in that case they would not give mankind even a **Naqir**. (4:53)

All of this goes to show how incapable mankind is and how divergent and inconsistent their ideas and desires are. Only Allah, may He be glorified, is Perfect in all His attributes, words, actions, laws, power and control of His creation, may He be exalted and sanctified. There is no God but He and no Lord besides Him.

Then He says:

... بَلْ أَتَيْنَاهُم بِذِكْرِهِمْ ...

Nay, We have brought them their reminder,

meaning the Qur'an,

... فَهُمْ عَن ذِكْرِهِم مُّعْرِضُونَ (٧١)

but they turn away from their reminder.

The Prophet does not ask for any payment, and he calls to the straight path

Allah says;

أَمْ تَسْأَلُهُمْ خَرْجًا ...

Or is it that you ask them for some **Kharj**,

Al-Hasan said,

"A reward.''

Qatadah said,

"Some payment.''

... فَخَرَاجُ رَبِّكَ خَيْرٌ ...

But the recompense of your Lord is better,

means, you are not asking for any wages or payment or anything for calling them to right guidance, rather you are hoping for a great reward from Allah, as He says:

قُلْ مَا سَأَلْتُكُم مِّن أَجْرٍ فَهُوَ لَكُمْ إِنْ أَجْرِىَ إِلاَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ

Say: "Whatever wage I might have asked of you is yours. My wage is from Allah only.'' (34:47)

قُلْ مَآ أَسْـَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ وَمَآ أَنَآ مِنَ الْمُتَكَلِّفِينَ

Say: "No wage do I ask of you for this, nor am I one of the pretenders.'' (38:86)

قُل لاَّ أَسْـَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْراً إِلاَّ الْمَوَدَّةَ فِى الْقُرْبَى

Say: "No reward do I ask of you for this except to be kind to me for my kinship with you.'' (42:23)

وَجَآءَ مِنْ أَقْصَى الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى قَالَ يقَوْمِ اتَّبِعُواْ الْمُرْسَلِينَ اتَّبِعُواْ مَن لاَّ يَسْـَلُكُمْ أَجْراً

And there came a man running from the farthest part of the town. He said: "O my people! Obey the Messengers. Obey those who ask no wages of you, and who are rightly guided.'' (35:20-21)

... وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ (٧٢)

and He is the Best of those who give sustenance.

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ (٧٣)

And certainly, you call them to the straight path.

وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عَنِ الصِّرَاطِ لَنَاكِبُونَ (٧٤)

And verily, those who believe not in the Hereafter are indeed deviating far astray from the path.

meaning, they have gone astray and deviated.

The Situation of the Disbelievers

Allah says;

وَلَوْ رَحِمْنَاهُمْ وَكَشَفْنَا مَا بِهِم مِّن ضُرٍّ لَّلَجُّوا فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ (٧٥)

And though We had mercy on them and removed the distress which is on them, still they would obstinately persist in their transgression, wandering blindly.

Here Allah tells of their stubbornness in their disbelief, in that even if He had removed the calamity from them and made them understand the Qur'an, they still would not follow it; they would still persist in their disbelief and stubborn transgression.

This is like the **Ayat**:

وَلَوْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا لأَسْمَعَهُمْ وَلَوْ أَسْمَعَهُمْ لَتَوَلَّوا وَّهُم مُّعْرِضُونَ

Had Allah known of any good in them, He would indeed have made them listen; and even if He had made them listen, they would but have turned away with aversion. (8:23)

وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ وُقِفُواْ عَلَى النَّارِ فَقَالُواْ يلَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلاَ نُكَذِّبَ بِـَايَـتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بَلْ بَدَا لَهُمْ مَّا كَانُواْ يُخْفُونَ مِن قَبْلُ وَلَوْ رُدُّواْ لَعَـدُواْ لِمَا نُـهُواْ عَنْهُ

And if (**Lauw**) you could but see when they will be held over the (Hell) Fire! They will say: "Would that we were but sent back (to the world)! Then we would not deny the **Ayat** of our Lord, and we would be of the believers!''

Nay, it has become manifest to them what they had been concealing before. But if they were returned (to the world), they would certainly revert to that which they were forbidden. Until His statement: **بِمَبْعُوثِينَ** (be resurrected). (6:27-29)

This has to do with the knowledge of Allah. He knows about some- thing that will not happen, but if it were to happen, He knows how it would be.

Ad-Dahhak reported from Ibn Abbas:

"Every- thing that is implied in the word: **لَوْ** (If (**Lauw**)) is something that will never happen.''

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَـهُمْ بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا۟ لِرَبِّهِمْ وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ

23:76 And indeed We seized them with punishment, but they humbled not themselves to their Lord, nor did they invoke with submission to Him.

حَتَّى إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَاباً ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ إِذَا هُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ

23:77 Until, when We open for them the gate of severe punishment, then lo! they will be plunged in despair.

وَهُوَ الَّذِى أَنْشَأَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالأَبْصَـرَ وَالأَفْئِدَةَ قَلِيلاً مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ

23:78 It is He Who has created for you hearing, eyes, and hearts. Little thanks you give.

وَهُوَ الَّذِى ذَرَأَكُمْ فِى الأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

23:79 And it is He Who has created you on the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered back.

وَهُوَ الَّذِى يُحْىِ وَيُمِيتُ وَلَهُ اخْتِلَـفُ الَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ أَفَلاَ تَعْقِلُونَ

23:80 And it is He Who gives life and causes death, and His is the alternation of night and day. Will you not then understand!

بَلْ قَالُوا۟ مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ الأَوَّلُونَ

23:81 Nay, but they say the like of what the men of old said.

قَالُواْ أَءِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَاباً وَعِظَـماً أَءِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ

23:82 They said: "When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we be resurrected indeed!''

لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا نَحْنُ وَءَابَآؤُنَا هَـذَا مِن قَبْلُ إِنْ هَـذَآ إِلاَّ أَسَـطِيرُ الاٌّوَّلِينَ

23:83 "Verily, this we have been promised -- we and our fathers before! This is only (from) tales of the ancients!''

Allah's saying:

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُم بِالْعَذَابِ ...

And indeed We seized them with punishment,

means, `We tried and tested them with difficulties and calamities.'

His saying:

... فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ (٧٦)

but they humbled not themselves to their Lord, nor did they invoke with submission to Him.

means, that did not deter them from their disbelief and resistance, rather they persisted in their sin and misguidance,

فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا (but they humbled not themselves),

وَمَا يَتَضَرَّعُونَ (nor did they invoke (Allah) with submission to Him).

they did not call on Him.

This is like the **Ayah**:

فَلَوْلا إِذْ جَآءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا۟ وَلَـٰكِن قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ

> When Our torment reached them, why then did they not humble themselves! But their hearts became hardened, (6:43)

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Ibn Abbas said,

> "Abu Sufyan came to the Messenger of Allah and said, `O Muhammad, I ask you by Allah and by the ties of kinship between us, we have been reduced to eating camel hair and blood.'
>
> Then Allah revealed, وَلَقَدْ أَخَذْنَاهُم بِالْعَذَابِ فَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا (And indeed We seized them with punishment, but they humbled not themselves).
>
> This was also recorded by An-Nasa'i.

The basis of this **Hadith** is in the Two **Sahihs**, where it says that the Messenger of Allah prayed against the Quraysh when he could not make any headway with them, and he said,

اللَّهُمَّ أَعِنِّي عَلَيْهِمْ بِسَبْعٍ كَسَبْعِ يُوسُف

> O Allah, help me against them sending on them seven years (of famine) like the seven (years of drought) of Yusuf.

حَتَّى إِذَا فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَابًا ذَا عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ إِذَا هُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ (٧٧)

Until, when We open for them the gate of severe punishment, then lo! they will be plunged in despair.

> When the command of Allah reaches them and the Hour comes to them suddenly, and they are overtaken by the punishment of Allah which they were not expecting, then they will despair of any ease and goodness, and all their hopes will disappear.

Allah tells:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنشَأَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ...

It is He Who has created for you hearing, eyes, and hearts.

Allah mentions His blessings to His servants, in that He has given them hearing, sight and understanding through which they come to know things and draw lessons from them, the signs which attest to the Oneness of Allah and indicate that He is the One Who does what He wills and chooses what He wants.

... قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ (٧٨)

Little thanks you give.

means, how little you thank Allah for the blessings He has given you.

This is like the **Ayah**:

وَمَآ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly. (12:103)

He says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي ذَرَأَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ (٧٩)

And it is He Who has created you on the earth, and to Him you shall be gathered back.

Allah tells us about His great power and overwhelming authority, for He is the One Who originated creation and put people in all parts of the earth, with their different nations, languages and characteristics, then on the Day of Resurrection He will gather them all together, the first of them and the last, at a fixed time on a day appointed, and none will be left out, young or old,

male or female, noble or insignificant, but all will be brought back as they were originally created.

Allah said:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ ...

And it is He Who gives life and causes death,

meaning, He will bring the scattered bones back to life and cause the death of the nations,

... وَلَهُ اخْتِلَافُ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ ...

and His is the alternation of night and day.

meaning, by His command night and day are subjugated, each of them following the other and never departing from that pattern, as Allah says:

لاَ الشَّمْسُ يَنبَغِى لَهَآ أَن تدْرِكَ القَمَرَ وَلاَ الَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ

It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. (36:40)

... أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ (٨٠)

Will you not then understand!

means, do you not have minds that tell you of the Almighty, All-Knowing to Whom all things are subjugated, Who has power over all things and to Whom all things submit!

The Idolators thought that Resurrection after Death was very unlikely

Then Allah tells us about those who denied the resurrection, who were like the disbelievers who came before them:

بَلْ قَالُوا مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُونَ (٨١)

قَالُوا أَئِذَا مِتْنَا وَكُنَّا تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَئِنَّا لَمَبْعُوثُونَ (٨٢)

Nay, but they say the like of what the men of old said. They said:

"When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we be resurrected indeed!''

They thought it very unlikely that this would happen after they had disintegrated into nothing.

لَقَدْ وُعِدْنَا نَحْنُ وَآبَاؤُنَا هَذَا مِن قَبْلُ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ (٨٣)

"Verily, this we have been promised -- we and our fathers before (us)! This is only the tales of the ancients!''

This means,

"It is impossible that we could be brought back. This was said by those who learned it from the books and disputes of the ancients.''

This denial and rejection on their part is like the **Ayah** where Allah tells us about them:

أَءِذَا كُنَّا عِظَـماً نَّخِرَةً

قَالُواْ تِلْكَ إِذاً كَرَّةٌ خَـسِرَةٌ

فَإِنَّمَا هِىَ زَجْرَةٌ وَحِدَةٌ

فَإِذَا هُم بِالسَّاهِرَةِ

"Even after we are crumbled bones,''

They say: "It would in that case, be a return with loss!''

But it will be only a single **Zajrah**, When behold, they find themselves on the surface of the earth alive after their death. (79:11-14)

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الإِنسَـنُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَـهُ مِن نُّطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مٌّبِينٌ

وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلاً وَنَسِىَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَن يُحىِ الْعِظَـمَ وَهِىَ رَمِيمٌ

قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِى أَنشَأَهَآ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ

Does not man see that We have created him from **Nutfah**. Yet behold he (stands forth) as an open opponent. And he puts forth for Us a parable, and forgets his own creation.

He says: "Who will give life to these bones after they are rotten and have become dust!''

Say: "He will give life to them Who created them for the first time! And He is the All-Knower of every creation!'' (36:77-79)

قُل لِّمَنِ الاٌّرْضُ وَمَن فِيهَآ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

23:84 Say: "Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein! If you know!''

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلاَ تَذَكَّرُونَ

23:85 They will say: "It is Allah's!'' Say: "Will you not then remember!''

قُلْ مَن رَّبُّ السَّمَـوَتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

23:86 Say: "Who is (the) Lord of the seven heavens, and (the) Lord of the Great Throne!''

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلاَ تَتَّقُونَ

23:87 They will say: "Allah.'' Say: "Will you not then have Taqwa!''

قُلْ مَن بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَهُوَ يُجْيِرُ وَلاَ يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

23:88 Say: "In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything! And He protects, while against Whom there is no protector, if you know!''

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ

23:89 They will say: "(All that belongs) to Allah.'' Say: "How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth!''

بَلْ أَتَيْنَـهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَـذِبُونَ

23:90 Nay, but We have brought them the truth, and verily, they are liars.

The Idolators believe in Tawhid Ar-Rububiyyah, which requires them to believe in Tawhid Al-Uluhiyyah

Allah states that the fact that He is One and that He is independent in His creation, control, dominion and guides one to realize that there is no God except Him and that none should be worshipped except Him Alone, with no partner or associate. He tells His Messenger Muhammad to say to the idolators who worship others besides Him, even though they admit His Lordship, that He has no partner in Lordship. But despite this they still attributed partners in divinity to Him, and worshipped others besides Him even though they recognized the fact that those whom they worshipped could not create anything, did not own anything, nor do they have any control over anything. However, they still believed that these creatures could bring them closer to Allah,

مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلاَّ لِيُقَرِّبُونَآ إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَى

> We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah. (39:3)

So Allah says:

قُل لِّمَنِ الْأَرْضُ وَمَن فِيهَا ...

> Say: "Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein!''
>
> > meaning, "Who is the Owner Who has created it and whatever is in it of animals, plants, fruits and all other kinds of creation.''

... إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٨٤)

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ...

"If you know!''

They will say: "It is Allah's!''

> means, they will admit that this belongs to Allah Alone with no partner or associate.

If that is the case,

... قُلْ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ (٨٥)

Say: "Will you not then remember!''

> that none should be worshipped except the Creator and Provider.

قُلْ مَن رَّبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ (٨٦)

Say: "Who is Lord of the seven heavens, and Lord of the Great Throne!''

> means, "Who is the Creator of the higher realm with its planets, lights and angels who submit to Him in all regions and in all directions! Who is the Lord of the Great Throne, which is the highest of all created things!''

Allah says here:

... وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ

and Lord of the Great Throne,

> meaning the Mighty Throne.

At the end of the **Surah**, Allah says:

... رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

the Lord of the Supreme Throne! (23:116),

> meaning splendid and magnificent.

The Throne combines the features of height and vastness with splendor and magnificence. This is why it was said that it is made of red rubies.

Ibn Mas`ud said,

"There is no night or day with your Lord, and the light of the Throne is from the Light of His Face.''

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ قُلْ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (٨٧)

They will say: "Allah.''

Say: "Will you not then have **Taqwa**!''

meaning, since you admit that He is the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the Mighty Throne, will you not fear His punishment for worshipping others besides Him and associating others with Him!

قُلْ مَن بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ ...

Say: "In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything!''

i.e., sovereignty is in His Hands.

مَّا مِن دَآبَّةٍ إِلاَّ هُوَ ءاخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَآ

There is not a moving creature but He has grasp of its forelock. (11:56)

meaning, He has control over it.

The Messenger of Allah used to say,

لَا وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِه

By the One in Whose hand is my soul.

When he swore an oath, he would say,

لَا وَمُقَلِّبِ الْقُلُوب

By the One Who turns over (controls) the hearts.

He, may He be glorified, is the Creator, the Sovereign, the Controller,

... وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (٨٨)

And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, if you know!

Among the Arabs, if a leader announced his protection to a person, no one could go against him in that, yet no one could offer protection against that leader.

Allah says:

... وَهُوَ يُجِيرُ وَلَا يُجَارُ عَلَيْهِ ...

And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector,

meaning, He is the greatest Master, and there is none greater than Him. His is the power to create and to command, and none can overturn or oppose His ruling. What He wills happens, and what He does not, will not happen.

Allah says:

لاَ يُسْأَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْـَلُونَ

He cannot be questioned about what He does, while they will be questioned. (21:23)

He cannot be asked about what He does because of His greatness, Pride, overwhelming power, wisdom and justice, but all of His creation will be asked about what they did, as Allah says:

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَسْـَلَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

عَمَّا كَانُوا۟ يَعْمَلُونَ

So, by your Lord, We shall certainly call all of them to account. For all that they used to do. (15:92-93)

سَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّهِ ...

They will say: "(All that belongs) to Allah.''

means, they will admit that the Almighty Master Who protects all while against Him there is no protector is Allah Alone, with no partner or associate.

... قُلْ فَأَنَّى تُسْحَرُونَ (٨٩)

Say: "How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth!''

means, how can your minds accept the idea of worshipping others besides Him when you recognize and acknowledge that!

Then Allah says:

بَلْ أَتَيْنَاهُم بِالْحَقِّ ...

Nay, but We have brought them the truth,

which is the declaration that there is no god worthy of worship besides Allah, and the establishment of clear, definitive and sound proof to that effect,

... وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ (٩٠)

and verily, they are liars.

means, in their worship of others alongside Allah when they have no evidence for doing so, as Allah says at the end of this **Surah**:

وَمَن يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ

And whoever invokes, besides Allah, any other god, of whom he has no proof; then his reckoning is only with his Lord. Surely, the disbelievers will not be successful. (23:117)

The idolators have no evidence for what they are doing, which has led them into lies and misguidance. Rather they are following their forefathers and predecessors who were confused and ignorant, as Allah describes them:

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَآ ءَابَآءَنَا عَلَى أُمَّةٍ وَإِنَّا عَلَى ءَاثَـرِهِم مُّقْتَدُونَ

"We found our fathers following a certain way and religion, and we will indeed follow their footsteps.'' (43:23)

مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِن وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَـهٍ

23:91 No son (or offspring) did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him.

إِذاً لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَـهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلاَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ

(If there had been many gods), then each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others!

سُبْحَـنَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ

Glorified be Allah above all that they attribute to Him!

عَـلِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّـهَـدَةِ فَتَعَـلَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

23:92 All-Knower of the unseen and the seen! Exalted be He over all that they associate as partners to Him!

Allah has no Partner or Associate

Allah declares Himself to be above having any child or partner in dominion, control and worship.

He says:

مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِن وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِذًا لَّذَهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ...

No son did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him. (If there had been many gods), then each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others.

meaning, if it were decreed that there should be a plurality of deities, each of them would have exclusive control over whatever he had created, so there would never be any order in the universe. But what we see is that the universe is ordered and cohesive, with the upper and lower realms connected to one another in the most perfect fashion.

مَّا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفَوُتٍ

you can see no fault in the creation of the Most Gracious. (67:3)

Moreover, if there were a number of gods, each of them would try to subdue the other with enmity, and one would prevail over the other.

This has been mentioned by the scholars of **Ilm-ul-Kalam**, who discussed it using the evidence of mutual resistance or counteraction.

This idea states that if there were two or more creators, one would want to make a body move while the other would want to keep it immobile, and if neither of them could achieve what they wanted, then both would be incapable, but the One Whose existence is essential (i.e., Allah) cannot be incapable. It is impossible for the will of both to be fulfilled because of the conflict.

This dilemma only arises when a plurality of gods is suggested, so it is impossible for there to be such a plurality, because if the will of one is fulfilled and not the other, the one who prevails will be the one whose existence is essential (i.e.,

God) and the one who is prevailed over will be merely possible (i.e., he is not divine), because it is not befitting for the one to be defeated whose existence is essential.

Allah says:

... وَلَعَلَا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يَصِفُونَ (٩١)

and some would have tried to overcome others!

Glorified be Allah above all that they attribute to Him!

meaning, high above all that the stubborn wrongdoers say when they claim that He has a son or partner.

عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ ...

All-Knower of the unseen and the seen!

means, He knows what is hidden from His creatures and what they see.

... فَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (٩٢)

Exalted be He over all that they associate as partners to Him!

means, sanctified and glorified and exalted be He above all that the wrongdoers and liars say.

قُل رَّبِّ إِمَّا تُرِيَنِّى مَا يُوعَدُونَ

23:93 Say: "My Lord! If You would show me that with which they are threatened, ''

رَبِّ فَلاَ تَجْعَلْنِى فِى الْقَوْمِ الظَّـلِمِينَ

23:94 "My Lord! Then, put me not amongst the people who are the wrongdoers.''

وَإِنَّا عَلَى أَن نُّرِيَكَ مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَـدِرُونَ

23:95 And indeed We are able to show you that with which We have threatened them.

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةَ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ

23:96 Repel evil with that which is better. We are best-acquainted with the things they utter.

وَقُلْ رَّبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيـطِينِ

23:97 And say: "My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings of the Shayatin.''

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَن يَحْضُرُونِ

23:98 "And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they should come near me.''

The Command to call on Allah when Calamity strikes, to repel Evil with that which is better, and to seek refuge with Allah

Allah commands His Prophet Muhammad to:

قُل ...

Say:

Allah commands His Prophet Muhammad to call on Him with this supplication when calamity strikes:

... رَّبِّ إِمَّا تُرِيَنِّي مَا يُوعَدُونَ (٩٣)

My Lord! If You would show me that with which they are threatened.

رَبِّ فَلَا تَجْعَلْنِي فِي الْقَوْمِ الظَّالِمِينَ (٩٤)

"My Lord! Then, put me not amongst the people who are the wrongdoers.''

meaning, `if You punish them while I am witnessing that, then do not cause me to be one of them.'

As was said in the **Hadith** recorded by Imam Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi, who graded it **Sahih**:

وَإِذَا أَرَدْتَ بِقَومٍ فِتْنَةً فَتَوَفَّنِي إِلَيْكَ غَيْرَ مَفْتُون

If You want to test people, then take me to You (cause me to die) without having to undergo the test.

وَإِنَّا عَلَى أَن نُّرِيَكَ مَا نَعِدُهُمْ لَقَادِرُونَ (٩٥)

And indeed We are able to show you that with which We have threatened them.

means, `if We willed, We could show you the punishment and test that We will send upon them.'

Then Allah shows him the best way to behave when mixing with people, which is to treat kindly the one who treats him badly, so as to soften his heart and turn his enmity to friendship, and to turn his hatred to love.

Allah says:

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةَ ...

Repel evil with that which is better.

This is like the **Ayah**:

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِى هِىَ أَحْسَنُ فَإِذَا الَّذِى بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ وَلِىٌّ حَمِيمٌوَمَا يُلَقَّاهَا إِلاَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ

Repel (the evil) with one which is better, then verily he, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend. But none is granted it except those who are patient.

meaning, nobody will be helped or inspired to follow this advice or attain this quality, إِلاَّ الَّذِينَ صَبَرُواْ (except those who are patient),

meaning, those who patiently bear people's insults and bad treatment and deal with them in a good manner when they are on the receiving end of bad treatment from them,

وَمَا يُلَقَّاهَآ إِلاَّ ذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

and none is granted it except the owner of the great portion.

means, in this world and the Hereafter. (41:34-35)

... نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَصِفُونَ (٩٦)

We are best-acquainted with the things they utter.

And Allah says:

وَقُل رَّبِّ أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِينِ (٩٧)

And say: "My Lord! I seek refuge with You from the whisperings of the Shayatin."

Allah commanded him to seek refuge with Him from the **Shayatin**, because no trick could help you against them and you cannot protect yourself by being kind to them.

We have already stated, when discussing **Isti`adhah** (seeking refuge), that the Messenger of Allah used to say,

أَعُوذُ بِاللهِ السَّمِيعِ الْعَلِيمِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ مِنْ هَمْزِهِ وَنَفْخِهِ وَنَفْثِه

I seek refuge with Allah, the All-Hearing, All-Seeing, from the accursed **Shayatin**, from his whisperings, evil suggestions and insinuations.

His saying:

وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ رَبِّ أَن يَحْضُرُونِ (٩٨)

"And I seek refuge with You, My Lord! lest they should come near me.''

means, in any issue of my life.

So we are commanded to mention Allah at the beginning of any undertaking, in order to ward off the **Shayatin** at the time of eating, intercourse, slaughtering animals for food, etc.

Abu Dawud recorded that the Messenger of Allah used to say:

اللَّهُمَّ

- إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَرَمِ،
- وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْهَدْمِ وَمِنَ الْغَرَقِ،
- وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ يَتَخَبَّطَنِي الشَّيْطَانُ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ

O Allah,

- I seek refuge with You from old age,
- I seek refuge with You from being crushed or drowned, and
- I seek refuge with you from being assaulted by the **Shayatin** at the time of death.

حَتَّى إِذَا جَآءَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ

23:99 Until, when death comes to one of them, he says: "My Lord! Send me back,''

لَعَلِّى أَعْمَلُ صَـلِحاً فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ

23:100 "So that I may do good in that which I have left behind!''

كَلاَّ إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَآئِلُهَا وَمِن وَرَآئِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

No! (Kalla) It is but a word that he speaks; and in front of them is Barzakh until the Day when they will be resurrected.

The Disbelievers' Hope when death approaches

Allah tells:

حَتَّى إِذَا جَاء أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ ...

Until, when death comes to one of them, he says:

Allah tells us about what happens when death approaches one of the disbelievers or one of those who have been negligent with the commands of Allah. He tells us what he says and how he asks to come back to this world so that he can rectify whatever wrongs he committed during his lifetime.

... رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ (٩٩)

لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ كَلَّا ...

"My Lord! Send me back, so that I may do good in that which I have left behind!'' No!

This is like the **Ayat**:

وَأَنفِقُواْ مِن مَّا رَزَقْنَـكُمْ مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِىَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ

And spend of that with which We have provided you before death comes to one of you, until His saying: **وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ** (And Allah is All-Aware of what you do. (63:10-11)

وَأَنذِرِ النَّاسَ يَوْمَ يَأْتِيهِمُ الْعَذَابُ

And warn mankind of the Day when the torment will come unto them upto His saying; **مَا لَكُمْ مِّن زَوَالٍ** (that you would not leave (the world for the Hereafter). (14:44)

And His saying:

يَوْمَ يَأْتِى تَأْوِيلُهُ يَقُولُ الَّذِينَ نَسُوهُ مِن قَبْلُ قَدْ جَآءَتْ رُسُلُ رَبِّنَا بِالْحَقِّ فَهَل لَّنَا مِن شُفَعَآءَ فَيَشْفَعُواْ لَنَآ أَوْ نُرَدُّ فَنَعْمَلَ غَيْرَ الَّذِى كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ

On the Day the event is finally fulfilled, those who neglected it before will say: "Verily, the Messengers of our Lord did come with the truth, now are there any intercessors for us that they might intercede on our behalf Or could we be sent back so that we might do deeds other than those deeds which we used to do.'' (7:53)

And;

وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذِ الْمُجْرِمُونَ نَاكِسُواْ رُءُوسِهِمْ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ رَبَّنَآ أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَـلِحاً إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ

And if you only could see when the criminals shall hang their heads before their Lord (saying): "Our Lord! We have now seen and heard, so send us back, that we will do righteous good deeds. Verily, we now believe with certainty.'' (32:12)

And;

وَلَوْ تَرَى إِذْ وُقِفُواْ عَلَى النَّارِ فَقَالُواْ يلَيْتَنَا نُرَدُّ وَلاَ نُكَذِّبَ بِـَايَـتِ رَبِّنَا

If you could but see when they will be held over the (Hell) Fire! They will say: "Would that we were but sent back! Then we would not deny the Ayat of our Lord. ..'' until His saying; **وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَـذِبُونَ** (And indeed they are liars). (6:27-28)

And;

وَتَرَى الظَّـلِمِينَ لَمَّا رَأَوُاْ الْعَذَابَ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ إِلَى مَرَدٍّ مِّن سَبِيلٍ

And you will see the wrongdoers, when they behold the torment, they will say: "Is there any way of return!'' (42:44)

And;

قَالُواْ رَبَّنَآ أَمَتَّنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا اثْنَتَيْنِ فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَى خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ

They will say: "Our Lord! You have made us to die twice, and You have given us life twice! Now we confess our sins, then is there any way to get out!'' (40:11)

and the **Ayah** after it:

And;

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِخُونَ فِيهَا رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَـلِحاً غَيْرَ الَّذِى كُـنَّا نَعْمَلُ أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُمْ مَّا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَن تَذَكَّرَ وَجَآءَكُمُ النَّذِيرُ فَذُوقُواْ فَمَا لِلظَّـلِمِينَ مِن نَّصِيرٍ

Therein they will cry: "Our Lord! Bring us out, we shall do righteous good deeds, not what we used to do.''

(Allah will reply:) "Did We not give you lives long enough, so that whosoever would receive admonition could receive it And the warner came to you. So taste you (the evil of your deeds). For the wrongdoers there is no helper.'' (35:37)

Allah says that they will ask to go back, when death approaches, on the Day of Resurrection, when they are gathered for judgment before the Compeller (Allah) and when they are in the agonies of the punishment of Hell, but their prayer will not be answered.

Here Allah says:

... كَلَّا إِنَّـهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا ...

No! It is but a word that he speaks;

The word **Kalla** (No!) is a word that is used to rebuke, and the meaning is:

"No, We will not respond to what he asks for and We will not accept it from him.''

... كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا ...

It is but a word that he speaks,

> refers to his asking to go back so that he can do righteous deeds;
>
> this is just talk on his part, it would not be accompanied by any action. If he were to go back, he would not do any righteous good deeds, he is merely lying, as Allah says:
>
> وَلَوْ رُدُّوا۟ لَعَـٰدُوا۟ لِمَا نُهُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَكَـٰذِبُونَ
>
> > But if they were returned, they would certainly revert to that which they were forbidden. And indeed they are liars. (6:28)

Qatadah said:

> "By Allah, he will not wish to go back to his family and tribe, or to accumulate more of the things of this world or satisfy his desires, but he will wish that he could go back to do acts of obedience to Allah. May Allah have mercy on a man who does that which the disbeliever will wish he had done when he sees the punishment of Hell.''

Barzakh and Punishment therein

Allah says:

... وَمِن وَرَائِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ (١٠٠)

and in front of them is **Barzakh** until the Day when they will be resurrected.

Abu Salih and others said that: وَمِن وَرَائِهِم (and in front of them), means before them.

Mujahid said,

> **Al-Barzakh** is a barrier between this world and the Hereafter.

Muhammad bin Ka`b said,

> "**Al-Barzakh** is what is between this world and the Hereafter, neither they are the people of this world, eating and drinking, nor are they with the people of the Hereafter, being rewarded or punished for their deeds.''

Abu Sakhr said,

> "**Al-Barzakh** refers to the graves. They are neither in this world nor the Hereafter, and they will stay there until the Day of Resurrection.''

... وَمِن وَرَائِهِم بَرْزَخٌ ...

and in front of them is **Barzakh**.

In these words is a threat to those wrongdoers at the time of death, of the punishment of **Barzakh**.

This is similar to the **Ayat**:

مِّن وَرَآئِهِمْ جَهَنَّمُ

In front of them there is Hell. (45:10)

وَمِن وَرَآئِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ

and in front of him will be a great torment. (14:17)

... إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

until the Day when they will be resurrected.

means, he will be punished continually until the Day of Resurrection, as it says in the **Hadith**:

فَلَا يَزَالُ مُعَذَّبًا فِيهَا

He will continue to be punished in it.

meaning, in the earth.

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِى الصُّورِ فَلاَ أَنسَـبَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلاَ يَتَسَآءَلُونَ

23:101 Then, when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another.

فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَزِينُهُ فَأُوْلَـئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

23:102 Then, those whose Scales (of good deeds) are heavy, these! they are the successful.

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَزِينُهُ فأُوْلَـئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُواْ أَنفُسَهُمْ فِى جَهَنَّمَ خَـلِدُونَ

23:103 And those whose Scales (of good deeds) are light, they are those who lose themselves, in Hell will they abide.

تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَـلِحُونَ

23:104 The Fire will burn their faces, and therein they will grin, with displaced lips (disfigured).

The sounding of the Trumpet and the weighing of Deeds in the Scales

Allah says:

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ ...

Then, when the Trumpet is blown,

Allah says that when the Trumpet is blown for the Resurrection, and the people rise from their graves,

... فَلَا أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءلُونَ (١٠١)

there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another.

meaning that lineage will be of no avail on that Day, and a father will not ask about his son or care about him.

Allah says:

وَلاَ يَسْـَلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيماً يُبَصَّرُونَهُمْ

And no friend will ask a friend (about his condition), though they shall be made to see one another. (70:10-11)

meaning, no relative will ask about another relative, even if he can see him and even if he is carrying a heavy burden. Even if he was the dearest of people to him in this world, he will not care about him or take even the slightest part of his burden from him.

Allah says:

يَوْمَ يَفِرُّ الْمَرْءُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ

وَأُمِّهِ وَأَبِيهِ

وَصَـحِبَتِهِ وَبَنِيهِ

> That Day shall a man flee from his brother. And from his mother and his father. And from his wife and his children. (80:34-36)

Ibn Mas`ud said,

"On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will gather the first and the last, then a voice will call out, `Whoever is owed something by another, let him come forth and take it.' And a man will rejoice if he is owed something or had been mistreated by his father or child or wife, even if it is little.''

This is confirmed in the Book of Allah, where Allah says:

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءلُونَ

Then, when the Trumpet is blown, there will be no kinship among them that Day, nor will they ask of one another.

This was recorded by Ibn Abi Hatim.

فَمَن ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (١٠٢)

Then, those whose Scales are heavy, these! they are the successful.

means, the one whose good deeds outweigh his bad deeds, even by one.

This was the view of Ibn Abbas.

... فَأُوْلَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ...

they are the successful.

means, those who have attained victory and been saved from Hell and admitted to Paradise.

Ibn Abbas said,

"These are the ones who have attained what they wanted and been saved from an evil from which there is no escape.''

وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ...

And those whose Scales are light,

means, their evil deeds outweigh their good deeds.

... فَأُوْلَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ...

they are those who lose themselves,

means, they are doomed and have ended up with the worst deal.

Allah says:

... فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ (١٠٣)

in Hell will they abide.

meaning, they will stay there forever and will never leave.

تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهَهُمُ النَّارُ ...

The Fire will burn their faces,

This is like the **Ayah**:

وَتَغْشَى وُجُوهَهُمْ النَّارُ

and fire will cover their faces. (14:50)

and:

لَوْ يَعْلَمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُواْ حِينَ لاَ يَكُفُّونَ عَن وُجُوهِهِمُ النَّارَ وَلاَ عَن ظُهُورِهِمْ

If only those who disbelieved knew (the time) when they will not be able to ward off the Fire from their faces, nor from their backs. (21:39)

... وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ (١٠٤)

and therein they will grin, with displaced lips.

Ali bin Abi Talhah narrated from Ibn Abbas,

"Frowning.''

أَلَمْ تَكُنْ ءَايَـتِى تُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنْتُمْ بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ

23:105 "Were not My Ayat recited to you, and then you used to deny them!''

قَالُواْ رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْماً ضَآلِّينَ

23:106 They will say: "Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people.''

رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَـلِمُونَ

23:107 "Our Lord! Bring us out of this. If ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be wrongdoers.''

Rebuking the People of Hell, their admission of Their Wretchedness and their Request to be brought out of Hell

This is a rebuke from Allah to the people of Hell for the disbelief, sins, unlawful deeds and evil actions that they committed, because of which they were doomed.

Allah says:

أَلَمْ تَكُنْ آيَاتِي تُتْلَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَكُنتُم بِهَا تُكَذِّبُونَ (١٠٥)

"Were not My **Ayat** recited to you, and then you used to deny them!''

meaning, `I sent Messengers to you, and revealed Books, and cleared the confusion for you, so you have no excuse.'

This is like the **Ayat**:

لِئَلاَّ يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ

in order that mankind should have no plea against Allah after the Messengers. (4:165)

وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّى نَبْعَثَ رَسُولاً

And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger. (17:15)

كُلَّمَا أُلْقِىَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَآ أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ

Every time a group is cast therein, its keeper will ask: "Did no warner come to you'' Until His saying; **فَسُحْقًا لأَِّصْحَـبِ السَّعِيرِ** (So, away with the dwellers of the blazing Fire!) (67:8-10)

قَالُوا ...

They will say:

... رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ (١٠٦)

Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people.

meaning, evidence has been established against us, but we were so doomed that we could not follow it, so we went astray and were not guided.

Then they will say:

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ (١٠٧)

Our Lord! Bring us out of this. If ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be wrongdoers.

meaning, send us back to the world, and if we go back to what we used to do before, then we will indeed be wrongdoers who deserve punishment.

This is like the **Ayat**:

فَاعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَى خُرُوجٍ مِّن سَبِيلٍ

Now we confess our sins, then is there any way to get out, Until His statement: **فَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِىِّ الْكَبِيرِ** (So the judgment is only with Allah, the Most High, the Most Great!). (40:11-12)

meaning, there will be no way out, because you used to associate partners in worship with Allah whereas the believers worshipped Him Alone.

قَالَ اخْسَئُواْ فِيهَا وَلاَ تُكَلِّمُونِ

23:108 He (Allah) will say: "Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!''

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِى يَقُولُونَ

23:109 Verily, there was a party of My servants who used to say:

رَبَّنَآ ءَامَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَحِمِينَ

"Our Lord! We believe, so forgive us and have mercy on us, for You are the Best of all who show mercy!''

فَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سِخْرِيّاً حَتَّى أَنسَوْكُمْ ذِكْرِى وَكُنْتُمْ مِّنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ

23:110 But you took them for a laughing stock, so much so that they made you forget My remembrance while you used to laugh at them!

إِنِّى جَزَيْتُهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُواْ أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْفَآئِزُونَ

23:111 Verily, I have rewarded them this Day for their patience; they are indeed the ones that are successful.

Allah's Response and Rejection of the Disbelievers

This is the response of Allah to the disbelievers when they ask Him to bring them out of the Fire and send them back to this world.

قَالَ ...

He (Allah) will say:

... اخْسَؤُوا فِيهَا ...

Remain you in it with ignominy!

meaning, abide therein, humiliated, despised and scorned.

... وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ (١٠٨)

And speak you not to Me!

means, `do not ask for this again, for I will not respond to you.

Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn Abbas concerning this **Ayah**, اخْسَؤُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ (Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!)

"These are the words of **Ar-Rahman** when silencing them.''

Ibn Abi Hatim recorded that Abdullah bin `Amr said,

"The people of Hell will call on **Malik** for forty years, and he will not answer them. Then he will respond and tell them that they are to abide therein. By Allah, their cries will mean nothing to **Malik** or to the Lord of **Malik**. Then they will call on their Lord and will say,

قَالُواْ رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْماً ضَآلِّينَ

رَبَّنَآ أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَـلِمُونَ

Our Lord! Our wretchedness overcame us, and we were (an) erring people. Our Lord! Bring us out of this. If ever we return (to evil), then indeed we shall be wrongdoers. (23:106-107)

Allah will not answer them for a time span equivalent to twice the duration of this world. Then He will reply: اخْسَؤُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ (Remain you in it with ignominy! And speak you not to Me!)

By Allah, the people will not utter a single word after that, and they will merely be in the Fire of Hell, sighing in a high and low tone. Their voices are likened to those of donkeys, which start in a high tone and end in a low tone.''

Then Allah will remind them of their sins in this world and how they used to make fun of His believing servants and close friends:

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِي يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا وَارْحَمْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ (١٠٩)

فَاتَّخَذْتُمُوهُمْ سِخْرِيًّا ...

Verily, there was a party of My servants who used to say: "Our Lord! We believe, so forgive us and have

mercy on us, for You are the Best of all who show mercy!'' But you took them for a laughing stock,

meaning, `you made fun of them for calling on Me and praying to Me,'

... حَتَّى أَنسَوْكُمْ ذِكْرِي ...

so much so that they made you forget My remembrance,

means, your hatred for them made you forget what I would do to you.

... وَكُنتُم مِّنْهُمْ تَضْحَكُونَ (١١٠)

while you used to laugh at them!

means, at their deeds and worship.

This is like the **Ayah**:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا كَانُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا يَضْحَكُونَ

وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِهِمْ يَتَغَامَزُونَ

Verily, those who committed crimes used to laugh at those who believed. And, whenever they passed by them, used to wink one to another. (83:29-30)

meaning, they used to slander them in mockery.

Then Allah tells us how He will reward His friends and righteous servants, and says:

إِنِّي جَزَيْتُهُمُ الْيَوْمَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا ...

Verily, I have rewarded them this Day for their patience;

meaning, `for the harm and mockery that you inflicted on them,

... أَنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ (١١١)

they are indeed the ones that are successful.

I have caused them to attain the victory of joy, safety, Paradise and salvation from the Fire.'

قَـلَ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِى الاٌّرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ

23:112 He will say: "What number of years did you stay on earth!''

قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْماً أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَاسْأَلِ الْعَآدِّينَ

23:113 They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account.''

قَالَ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلاَّ قَلِيلاً لَّوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

23:114 He will say: "You stayed not but a little, if you had only known!''

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَـكُمْ عَبَثاً وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لاَ تُرْجَعُونَ

23:115 "Did you think that We had created you in play, and that you would not be brought back to Us!''

فَتَعَـلَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ لاَ إِلَـهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ

23:116 So Exalted be Allah, the True King: None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Lord of Al-`Arsh Al-Karim!

Allah tells them how much they wasted in their short lives in this world by failing to obey Allah and worship Him Alone. If they had been patient during their short stay in this world, they would have attained victory just like His pious close friends.

قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ (١١٢)

He will say: "What number of years did you stay on earth!''

means, how long did you stay in this world.

قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَاسْأَلْ الْعَادِّينَ (١١٣)

They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day. Ask of those who keep account.''

meaning, those who keep the records.

قَالَ إِن لَّبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ...

He will say: "You stayed not but a little...''

meaning, it was only a short time, no matter how you look at it.

... لَّوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ (١١٤)

if you had only known!

means, you would not have preferred the transient to the eternal, and treated yourself in this bad way, and earned the wrath of Allah in this short period. If you had patiently obeyed Allah and worshipped Him as the believers did, you would have attained victory just as they did.

Allah did not create His Servants in vain

Allah tells:

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا ...

Did you think that We had created you in play,

means, `did you think that you were created in vain, with no purpose, with nothing required of you and no wisdom on Our part!'

Or it was said that "in play'' meant to play and amuse yourselves, like the animals were created, who have no reward or punishment. But you were created to worship Allah and carry out His commands.

... وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ (١١٥)

and that you would not be brought back to Us!

means, that you would not be brought back to the Hereafter.

This is like the **Ayah**:

أَيَحْسَبُ الإِنسَـنُ أَن يُتْرَكَ سُدًى

Does man think that he will be left neglected! (75:36)

فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ الْمَلِكُ الْحَقُّ ...

So Exalted be Allah, the True King.

means, sanctified be He above the idea that he should create anything in vain, for He is the True King Who is far above doing such a thing.

... لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ (١١٦)

None has the right to be worshipped but He, the Lord of **Al-`Arsh Al-Karim**!

The Throne is mentioned because it is the highest point of all creation, and it is described as **Karim**, meaning beautiful in appearance and splendid in form, as Allah says elsewhere:

أَنبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِن كُلِّ زَوْجٍ كَرِيمٍ

every good kind We cause to grow therein. (26:7)

وَمَن يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَـهَا ءَاخَرَ لاَ بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ

23:117 And whoever invokes besides Allah, any other god, of whom he has no proof; then his reckoning is only with his Lord.

إِنَّهُ لا يُفْلِحُ الْكَفِرُونَ

Surely, disbelievers will not be successful.

وَقُل رَّبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَحِمِينَ

23:118 And say : "My Lord! Forgive and have mercy, for You are the Best of those who show mercy!''

Allah says:

وَمَن يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ ...

And whoever invokes besides Allah, any other god,

Shirk is the Worst form of Wrong, its Practitioner shall never succeed. Allah threatens those who associate anything else with Him and worship anything with Him. He informs that those who associate others with Allah:

... لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ ...

of whom he has no proof,

meaning no evidence for what he says.

Then Allah says:

وَمَن يَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ لَا بُرْهَانَ لَهُ بِهِ ...

And whoever invokes, besides Allah, any other god, of whom he has no proof;

this is a conditional sentence, whose fulfilling clause is:

... فَإِنَّمَا حِسَابُهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ ...

then his reckoning is only with his Lord.

meaning, Allah will call him to account for that.

Then Allah tells us:

... إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْكَافِرُونَ (١١٧)

Surely, disbelievers will not be successful.

meaning, they will not be successful with Him on the Day of Resurrection; they will not prosper or be saved.

... وَقُل

And say:

رَّبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

My Lord!

Forgive and have mercy, for You are the best of those who show mercy!

Here Allah is teaching us to recite this supplication, for forgiveness, in a general sense, means wiping away sins and concealing them from people, and mercy means guiding a person and helping him to say and do good things.

This is the end of the Tafsir of Surah **Al-Mu'minun**. All praise and thanks are due to Allah.